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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

A CRITICAL READING OF THE DREAM OF THE ROOD

by

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A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled A Critical Reading of the Dream of the Rood.

submitted by Agnes H. Hubert

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

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Abstract

There is almost universal critical agreement that the Dream of the Rood constitutes one of the gems of English literature. With some reservations as to its unity, most scholars concur that it provides an intensely moving account of Christ's crucifixion unlike other treaments of the subject in Old English literature. Divergent from the Old English literary tradition as it is, the Dream of the Rood's ties to that tradition are apparent throughout the poem. This thesis examines the imagery and the diction in the Dream of the Rood, discussing the poet's use of traditional literary convention to express new and profound spiritual truth.

After a brief introduction, Chapter II deals with the traditional theme of exile as it relates to the Dream of the Rood. The poet uses the theme of exile so common in Old English elegiac poetry as a metaphor portraying his own spiritual condition. Using the stained cross as a symbol of that exile, he expands the theme to accommodate Christian elements in order to instruct the Anglo-Saxons in the Christian faith.

Chapter III uses the same process to discuss the concepts which surround the symbol of the splendent cross which stands as absolute contrast to the stained cross. By using heroic diction, the Rood-poet evokes all the ideal

connotations usually associated with mighty deeds and puts them to a Christian and ultimately didactic use.

Chapter IV uses the dichotomy set up between the stained and splendent cross and examines the poet's techniques of transformation from stains to splendour. The poet uses the cross's alteration from stains to splendour as an example for himself and, ultimately, for all of mankind.

Having discussed thematic unity in Chapters II, III and IV, Chapter V uses verbal echoes to demonstrate the unity of the poem on the level of diction as well. Using patterns occuring in both halves of the poem, this chapter shows the poet's subtle addition of levels of meaning each time a word recurs in the verbal pattern. The thesis ends by concluding that the poem is as finely wrought verbally as thematically, and that the poet has revealed, through the unity of his poem, the possibility of mystical oneness with Christ.

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Chapter I: Introduction

Much has been written about the Dream of the Rood and virtually every commentator agrees with Kemp Malone that it is "one of the glories of Old English literature."[1] Although much excellent critical work has been done on this poem, I find that most of the criticism moves away from the poem for aid in elucidating it. Helpful as articles relating artistic, liturgical or doctrinal influences to the Dream of the Rood may be, they leave one too distanced from the poem itself. The majority of scholarship that deals more closely with the poem as poetry treats only very small aspects of the whole and as a result might more accurately be labelled notes than full-length articles. In both categories there are articles of inestimable value, however, and these are used when relevant throughout this thesis.

Bearing in mind the scattered nature of Rood-criticism I have attempted to provide a comprehensive reading of the Dream of the Rood as poetry, staying as close to the text as possible without losing important insights offered by seekers of outside influence. Laudable as the aims of formalist criticism may be, they cannot be rigidly applied to Old English literature, for one must always allow for the influence of the formulaic literary tradition of which the Dream of the Rood is a part. Heroic concepts inform that

literary tradition, and to disregard the fusion of the heroic literary tradition with the Christianity of the Anglo-Saxons is to place a complete understanding of the Dream of the Rood in jeopardy. But the careful distinction of traditional elements in Old English Christian poetry, while recognized as necessary, has not been done as thoroughly as might be desired. Campbell and Rosier state the matter succinctly:

> this delicate matter of separating or isolating the pagan from the Christian, the native English from the learned Latin, has in the past been ridden over roughshod with little attention to the successful synthesis the English made of their two major cultural traditions during the Old English period.[2]

This situation is being rectified, and the present thesis constitutes an attempt to provide an analysis of the fusion of the two cultures in the Dream of the Rood.

The Rood-poet displays poetic skills of genius in his treatment of the crucifixion. To make this all-important spiritual event comprehensible to his audience, he uses familiar literary traditions. But the event itself is not heroic in the traditional sense. To resolve this dilemma, the Rood-poet uses heroic "keynotes," words and concepts which suggest heroic connotations in what strictly speaking is fundamentally a non-heroic event. The poet's use of these keynotes is so astute that he evokes in a half-line or even just a word many of the associations that other Old

English poets elaborate at length. Thus, in a short one hundred and fifty-six lines of poetry, the Rood-poet makes many passages serve a multiple function and piles level upon level of meaning into a subtle, complex and intensely moving work.

J.A. Burrow calls the Dream of the Rood a revelation of the journey from "fear and sorrow to hope;"[3] similarly, J.V. Fleming refers to the poem as a "movement from exile to community."[4] These two antithetical concepts, exile and community, and the movement from the former to the latter, provide the framework upon which this thesis rests. Chapter II deals with the expression of the metaphor of exile in the poem. The visionary is in spiritual exile at the beginning of the poem; by the end of it, his spirit has found a community and only his body remains in physical exile. Chapter III concerns the other end of the continuum in this poem, community. The poet takes pains to show exile's opposite and to relate the Anglo-Saxon concept of comitatus to the spiritual concept of redemption and ultimate glory in heaven. Chapter IV examines the poet's transition from exile to community, the poetic technique whereby the transcendent, redemptive experience is expressed. This primarily thematic discussion leads naturally into a brief discussion of the unity of the poem, a point which has been somewhat contentious in the past. Chapter V deals strictly with verbal echoes as a proof of unity. These verbal echoes have

thematic significance which adds to the evidence for the poem's unity.

This thesis, then, shows where the Rood-poet makes use of his tradition as well as where he diverges from it in composing the very beautiful and moving poem, the Dream of the Rood.

Chapter II:

The Stained Cross as Symbol of Exile

In a letter to Bishop Mellitus in 601 A.D., Pope Gregory formulated a plan which, doubtless, had far-reaching effects on the Christianization of England. He counselled that

> . . . the temples of the idols among that people should on no account be destroyed, but the temples themselves are to be aspersed with holy water, altars set up in them, and relics deposited there. . . . In this way, we hope that the people, seeing that their temples are not destroyed, may abandon their error and, flocking more readily to their accustomed resorts, may come to know and adore the true God.[1]

This reasonable attitude on the part of the evangelizing Benedictines characterized other aspects of their association with the English as well. Saints' days were to replace pagan feasts, and these could be celebrated, according to Gregory, with "devout feasting."[2] This spirit of accommodation seems to have extended to the poetry that would surely have been part of the festivities. The new converts, following the example of the missionaries, retained elements of their pre-Christian poetic heritage, but transmuted them into works wholly Christian in tone. Some elements that seem to have characterized pre-Christian poetry could be adopted whole-heartedly, and their meanings extended to include Christian

elements.

One of these elements so adopted is the theme of exile that figures prominently in the Dream of the Rood and much of the best Old English poetry. Indeed, in the Dream of the Rood, what might be called pagan elements have been fused so perfectly into the Christian exhortation that the appellation "pagan" seems quite inaccurate. The exile theme, like the baptized temples, was pagan, but became Christian in the hands of Christian poets. It is one of the elements of the pre-Christian poetry that lent itself completely to the new religion without losing any of its former intensity. This marriage of elements is the concern of this thesis, and this chapter will deal specifically with the theme of exile.

In 1969, D.K. Fry stated that the themes of exile and hero-on-the-beach have been the only recurring themes in Old English poetry which have been isolated for study.[3] This restriction no longer holds, but as it happens, both of these themes are important for a proper understanding of the Dream of the Rood. The theme of exile is especially relevant to this poem and an examination of the vocabulary of selected elegiac poems in Old English will demonstrate how the Rood-poet has used and changed his tradition.

The Old English elegy comprehends considerably more than does the modern definition of a lament for a lost friend, although that is also a part of the tradition. L.H. Frey summarizes the elegiac mode very well:

> A favorite subject of reflection is the contrast between past joys and present sorrow, with the knowledge that sorrow follows joy in the nature of things. Another is the rhetorical ubi sunt? series of questions concerning what once was and is now dead or vanished. In any case the likely movement is toward a general understanding of the nature of the world, beginning with contemplation of one's own situation.[4]

Frey's criteria for elegy are illustrated by one of the most moving passages of Old English poetry. The Wanderer, lamenting his cruel fate, recalls the joy he had with his lord, only to awake from his happy dream to harsh reality:

> Þinceð him on mode — þæt he his mondryhten
> clyppe ond cysse, — ond on cneo lecge
> honda ond heafod, — swa he hwilum ær
> in geardagum — giefstolas breac.
> Ðonne onwæcneð eft — wineleas guma.[5]
> (Wan.41-45)

> He thinks in his mind that he embraces and kisses his lord, and lays hands and head on his knee, as when formerly in days of yore he came near the gift throne. Then the friendless man awakes again.

This dichotomy between present sorrow and past happiness gives the Old English elegies their universality.

Another important element in Anglo-Saxon elegy is the alternating pattern of sorrow and consolation. The Wanderer turns in the end to the fæder on heofonum, þær us eal seo fæstnung stondeð 'father in heaven, where security stands for us all'(Wan.115). The same concept of consolation comes through in The Seafarer as well. The Seafarer also decides that this life on earth is transitory and life in heaven much

to be desired. But consolation need not always be Christian. In Deor, a kind of stoicism expressed by Pæs ofereode, pisses swa mæg! 'That passed away, so may this!' constitutes the refrain after the telling of each set of tragedies.

Elegy is usually expressed through the words of an exile. For the Anglo-Saxon, the state of exile is the worst of all possible conditions, since, lacking a lord, he suffers total loneliness and ostracism. It is especially in terms of exile imagery that elegy is made most concrete. Stanley B. Greenfield states that there are four elements which characterize the exilic state: the speaker's status, his sense of deprivation, his depressed state of mind and his movement into or in exile.[6] Subsidiary to these main categories are the sense of constraint imposed on the exile and the unpleasant physical surroundings which symbolize the actual state. Greenfield's analysis applies particularly to exile imagery. Frey gives some additional categories that apply to elegy as a whole: the painful awareness of the transitory nature of worldly joy; the suffering that comes from comparing present sorrow to past happiness.[7] The following chart gives some indication of the vocabulary of elegy. This list is by no means exhaustive and is only meant to serve as a guide to the different elements that connote the elegiac mode.

Status - Solitude and Exile: ana, anhaga, anfloga, wræcca

Deprivation: freondleas, wineleas, bedælan, bereafian,

bedreosan, any compound of -leas

State of Mind: any compound of -cearig,[8] as in modcearig, cearseld, earmcearig, sorhcearig, cearu, and sorg, sare, earfoð, feasceaftig

Movement into or in Exile: wræclast, wræcsip, weste, idel

Constraint: fetor, any form of fæste bindan, nearu

Physical Surroundings: deorc, heolstor, any compound of -ceald, as in winterceald, and hagol, hrim ond snaw, renig, forst, beostru

In the Dream of the Rood, the theme of exile is expressed through the symbol of the stained cross. The stained cross is one half of the contrast that forms the most basic structural element of the Dream of the Rood. Together with the splendent cross, it comprehends all the image patterns that occur in the poem. A consideration of the set of images connected with the stained cross is essential to an understanding of the "fear and sorrow"[9] that mark the beginning of the movement to hope J.A. Burrow sees as the principal development in the Dream of the Rood. The symbol of the stained cross is, directly or indirectly, connected to all the images of exile, darkness and disharmony that the poem contains. Greenfield's comment on Christ I is applicable to the Dream of the Rood as well:

> A minor theme runs through the poem, a theme reflecting the Christian tradition of man's life as a spiritual exile from Heaven, Eden and the natural bond with his Creator.[10]

The cross itself is important as symbol, and its stains comment on its role as symbol and expand the field of its

identification beyond that of being a tree used for the crucifixion of the Lord. This theme of exile is not merely static, however; it mirrors in little the profound change in attitude that marks the connection between the stained and jewelled cross in the context of the whole poem. At the beginning of the poem, the exile theme is expressed through absolute disjunction, whereas at the end of the poem, exile means absence, not disharmony. Both the visionary and the cross as creatures are involved in this imagery of exile, and the visionary's involvement contains the cross's as a pod does its seed.

The poet introduces the theme of exile in the first three lines of the poem. He does this by placing the subject material of his poem, the actual vision, within a setting. This setting is not realistic, but a setting reflecting time and attitude, Ker's "visionary place."[11] In doing this, the poet, in the space of three lines, brings the audience into his vision so that the explicit and implicit watchers become one entity. What the visionary sees, we see. This is of utmost importance, since, with this identification of visionary and audience, the visionary becomes the audience's representative.

Hwæt! Ic swefna cyst secgan wylle,
hwæt me gemætte to midre nihte,
syðþan reordberend reste wunedon![12]
(1-3)

Hear while I tell about the best of dreams
Which came to me the middle of one night

While [speech-bearers] were sleeping in their beds.[13]

J.V. Fleming places the Dream of the Rood within the context of Anglo-Saxon monasticism, and claims that the visionary is most probably an especially devout monk who is worshipping the cross in the middle of the night as a proper ascetic should.[14] A.A. Lee concurs with the timing, and says that the visionary is in spiritual ecstasy.[15] It is true that midre nihte is the canonical hour for wakefulness, but it is not necessary to assume that the visionary is a monk. Syllic wæs se sigebeam, ond ic synnum fah,/forwunded mid wommum. '[Wondrous was] the glorious tree of victory./ And I with sins was stained, wounded with guilt'(13-14a) provides the answer to the timing of the vision. It is the middle of the night; the visionary is awake while the rest of the world sleeps. The timing sets him apart from the rest of mankind, as does his wakefulness, and the reason for the separation is his sense of his own sinfulness. The night is physical, but the darkness is spiritual. Both of these elements are indications of the visionary's status. As shown by the chart of exile imagery, darkness and unpleasant surroundings are one characteristic of the description of the exilic state. Grendel, the best example of the dream-deprived exile, in pystrum bad 'dwelt in darkness'(Bwf.87b). Here the speaker mentions only the darkness, but, added to his explicit separation from the rest of speech-bearers, the darkness expresses his condition. He is not a retainer

separated from his lord and suffering the unpleasantness, whether real or metaphorical, of bad weather. The speaker is in darkness, separated from the rest of sleeping humanity by his awareness of sin. He is truly exiled from "Heaven, Eden and the natural bond with his Creator."

The visionary's awareness of his sinful condition forms a sharp contrast with his vision of the bright cross; the splendour of the cross makes his sin-stained condition stand out in high relief. His consciousness of sin is further intensified by his beginning perception of the cross's sufferings:

> Hwæðre ic purh pæt gold ongytan meahte
> earmra ærgewin, pæt hit ærest ongan
> swætan on þa swiðran healfe. Eall ic wæs mid
> sorgum gedrefed,
> forht ic wæs for pære fægran gesyhðe. Geseah
> ic pæt fuse beacen
> wendan wædum ond bleom; hwilum hit wæs mid
> wætan bestemed,
> beswyled mid swates gange, hwilum mid since
> gegyrwed.
> (18-23)

> yet I could see beyond that gold
> The ancient strife of wretched men, when first
> Upon its right side it began to bleed.
> I was all moved with sorrows, and afraid
> At the fair sight. I saw that lively beacon
> Changing its clothes and hues; sometimes it was
> Bedewed with blood and drenched with flowing gore,
> At other times it was bedecked with treasure.

This passage has received much critical attention. Howard Patch sees in the alterations of the cross the changes in the crosses carried in the mass during Lent and Easter. A plain red cross was carried during Lent, a more ornamental cross

was used on Palm Sunday, and on Easter Sunday the crux de christallo appeared.[16] D.P. Farina interprets the changeful cross as part of the medieval Deposition ceremony which was, though non-liturgical, extremely popular. In this ritual, a figure of Christ was nailed to the cross, and then on Good Friday night taken down with much ceremony. The wounds of Christ were wiped with a sheet already prepared with stains, and then the stained sheet was displayed on the transverse beam of the jewelled altar crosses common at that time. Farina suggests that the "Dream of the Rood was composed during, or under the influence of one such Deposition ceremony."[17] On another tangent, Brian Branston sees this passage as the reworking of the Baldur myth: the bleeding god, killed by a tree of the forest, and mourned by all of creation.[18] Widely as these opinions differ, none of them is intrinsically impossible, yet all of them focus attention away from the poem. The description of the vision stands on its own as a plausible experience, and no outside influence need be sought.

The visionary feels both sorrow and fear as he realizes that the beam means more than just the glorious artifact he first sees. On first sight, the poet calls the glorious artifact a tree, but a tree covered in gold and jewels. The mention of five jewels on the shoulder-span further limits the possibilities as does the disclaimer Ne wæs ðær huru fracodes gealga 'No felon's gallows that'(10b).

With this evidence, although actual proof is delayed for another thirty-four lines, the audience would realize that the object is a jewelled cross. By mentioning the bleeding on the right side, the cross is immediately identified as Christ's. The cross as symbol of Christianity was well-known in Anglo-Saxon times. W.O. Stevens mentions that standard crosses often took the place of churches as sites of worship,[19] and in established churches, jewelled altar crosses were common.[20] Thus, the jewelled cross would immediately be associated with Christianity, and Christ's cross is the foremost association connected with such an object. Without naming it, the poet makes the identification of the cross quite clear.

In this passage the poet begins to use verbs of perception instead of verbs of seeing. By the use of ongytan, the poet intimates that, in addition to sight, the further dimension of understanding is now present.[21] Part of that understanding is the identification of the cross as Christ's. The fear and sorrow result from the perception of the ancient battle. Here the association between Christ and the cross spelled out later in the poem begins. The ancient battle is Christ's, but the cross, as an integral part of the strife, is identified as one of the combatants. The visionary realizes his role as enemy. He would be familiar with the passage about Christ's suffering in Isaiah:

But he was wounded for our trans-

> gressions, he was bruised for our
> iniquities: the chastisement of
> our peace was upon him; and with his
> stripes we are healed.
> Isaiah 53:5

Seeing the cross changing from gems to blood, the visionary's fear and sorrow are completely understandable. He has come into the presence of an object that reminds him of his sinfulness and also of his part in the crucifixion of the Lord of mankind.

The poet's overwhelming sorrow provides further evidence of the state of exile, but the poet works a subtle inversion of the normal exilic pattern, adding weight to the argument for spiritual exile. The death of the lord in battle is traditionally one of the causes of exile and, thus, of sorrow. But, in the context of this poem, the exile of mankind causes the ærgewin. Mankind's rebellion against the Lord is the root of the trouble and the visionary's exile results. The visionary goes on to say that he gazed in sorrow at the cross for a long time:

> Hwæðre ic pær licgende lange hwile
> beheold hreowcearig hælendes treow.
> (24-25)

> So I lay watching there the Saviour's tree,
> Grieving in spirit for a long, long while.

As can be seen from the chart, a compound of -cearig denotes the state of mind of an exile. The Wanderer is described as earmcearig 'full of sorrows'(Wan.20a)and wintercearig 'winter-sad'(Wan.24a). Thus hreowcearig, emphasizing as it

does the visionary's sorrow, reinforces the interpretation of the visionary as spiritual exile, a "sinner far from grace." With this re-emphasis on the visionary's sadness, the focus of the poem shifts to the cross. Having been brought to an acute perception of his sin-caused exile, the visionary has learned all he can by contemplating the cross that changes from splendour to stains. The next stage of his learning must depend on a greater understanding of that change.

In response to that need, the cross begins to speak.[22] Its first words have an elegiac ring as the cross remembers the day it was cut down in the forest:

> "Pæt wæs geara iu, (ic pæt gyta geman),
> pæt ic wæs aheawen holtes on ende,
> astyred of stefne minum. (28-30a)

> 'It was long past -- I still remember it --
> That I was cut down at the copse's end,
> Moved from my roots.

In the same way as the poet identifies with, yet separates himself from, the rest of mankind at the beginning of the poem, so the glorious tree identifies with, yet separates itself from, the rest of the trees in the forest. It is one of them, part of the wood, and in its separation from them comes its exile. The tree is a creature which, through no fault of its own, enters into a profound disharmony with the rest of creation. A few lines later, the cross characterizes itself as a loyal retainer. From this perspective, the tree becomes a warrior captured by strong enemies, carried into

exile and forced, as a cross, to work against the created order. The cross not only suffers capture; it must also bear the marks of captivity;

> Purhdrifan hi me mid deorcan næglum. On me syndon þa dolg gesiene,
> opene inwidhlemmas. (46-47a)
>
> They pierced me with dark nails;
> The scars can still be clearly seen on me,
> The open wounds of malice.

These lines occur in the middle of the poet's image of the cross as captured retainer. It is the victim of evil men who are products of the perverted dryht of earth,[23] and the gashed and malicious wounds give evidence of the disharmony caused by mankind's exile from its Lord. The same estrangement of fallen creation is reiterated by the cross:

> Feala ic on þam beorge gebiden hæbbe
> wraðra wyrda. (50-51a)
>
> And I underwent
> Full many a dire experience on that hill.

The dire experiences are again significant of the perversion of the ideal dryht of heaven.

From its exposition of its own hateful duty on the hill of Golgotha the cross suddenly expands its discourse to include the rest of creation:

> Þystro hæfdon
> bewrigen mid wolcnum wealdendes hræw,
> scirne sciman, sceadu forðeode,
> wann under wolcnum. Weop eal gesceaft,
> cwiðdon cyninges fyll. Crist wæs on rode.
> (52b-56)
>
> Darkness covered the Ruler's corpse with clouds,
> His shining beauty; shadows passed across,

Black in the darkness. All creation wept,
Bewailed the King's death; Christ was on the cross.

The darkness here is analogous to the to midre nihte at the beginning of the poem. Pystro, too, symbolizes spiritual night, the temporary victory of the perverse dryht of hell. The poet characterizes creation collectively as loyal retainers of the Lord mourning his death in a half-line that evokes images of Anglo-Saxon warriors grieving for their fallen lord. All creation is now lordless and weeps for its loss. Worse than that, in a total perversion of the Anglo-Saxon heroic values of loyalty, the creature aids the death of the creator. The cross which characterizes itself as a loyal retainer of the Lord is, in actual fact, an agent of his death. In Lee's interpretation of Old English poetry, the point farthest from the idealized dryht of heaven has been reached.

The cross is not yet finished with its story, however; the nadir of suffering is not the end. Having established the mourning of the non-human universe, it turns to the world of men, and in a half-line that almost exactly echoes the poet's description of his own spiritual condition, the cross reminds the audience vividly of the visionary. The visionary says of himself, Eall ic wæs mid sorgum gedrefed 'I was all moved with sorrows'(20b) and this indicates his exile. The cross states the same thing, but for a different reason:

Hwæðere þær fuse feorran cwoman
to þam æðelinge. Ic þæt eall beheold.
Sare ic wæs mid sorgum gedrefed, hnag ic
hwæðre þam secgum to handa,
eaðmod elne mycle. (57-60a)

And yet I saw men coming from afar.
Hastening to the Prince. I watched it all.
With sorrows I was grievously oppressed,
Yet willingly I bent to those men's hands,
Humbly.

The sorrow that torments the cross, however, is the sorrow of bereavement, not the sorrow of sin that overcomes the visionary. The poet subtly changes the idea of exile here. The visionary's sorrow at the beginning of the poem indicates the absence of a relationship, whereas the cross's sorrow shows the breaking of a relationship. Great as the cross's grief is, its plight is preferable to the wasteland of darkness in which the visionary exists. The retainer-cross has memories of the Lord and can yet fulfill the last duties of a loyal retainer. The human retainers of the fallen Lord arrive and prepare a fitting burial for him. The cross, also a grieving retainer and conscious of its own part in the fall of the King, can yet do one thing for its Lord: with great eagerness it delivers the body of the Lord to the disciples. Whereas it could not bend to defend its Lord, because that would counter his will, now the cross can and does bend, as a last act of homage to its Lord. The human retainers enact a mourning ritual that echoes passages of Beowulf very closely:

Aledon hie þær limwerigne, gestodon him æt

his lices heafdum,

. . . .

Ongunnon him þa moldern wyrcan
beornas on banan gesyhðe; curfon hie ðæt of beorhtan stane,
gesetton hie ðæron sigora wealdend. Ongunnon him þa sorhleoð galan
earme on þa æfentide. (63; 65b-68a)

They laid Him down limb-weary; then they stood
Beside the corpse's head,

. . .

The men then made a sepulchre for Him
In sight of me. They carved it of bright stone,
And set therein the Lord of victories.
Next, wretched in the eventide, they sang
a [sorrow-song] for Him.

In the passage of Beowulf known as the Old Man's Grief for his Son op the Gallows (Bwf.2444-2462a), the same phrase, sorhleoð gæleð (Bwf.2460b) is used to describe the Old Man's grief for his son. Here the Rood-poet depicts the grieving disciples in a way that would touch his audience and remind them of similar poetic situations. Again, the emphasis on physical darkness, the æfentide, symbolizes the state of exile that the human retainers have now entered. As he has done before in this poem, the poet evokes in a few words or a half-line all the associations of the ritual he is talking about, which is described more fully elsewhere in the Old English poetic canon. The allusive treatment of Christ's burial reminds one of the burial of Scyld in Beowulf, for example, and just as surely of Beowulf's own burial. The associations with Beowulf's burial are strengthened by the allusion to the fashioning of the grave, a scene reminiscent

of the fashioning of Beowulf's barrow on the headland overlooking the sea. Geworhton ða Wedra leode/ hleo on hoe 'Then the people of the Weders fashioned a barrow on the headland' (Bwf.3156-57a) expresses exactly the same action as Ongunnon him pa moldern wyrcan 'The men then made a sepulchre for Him' (65b). Indeed, the description of the dead king would, for the most part, be suitable for the fallen Christ as well: both have battle-warriors who chant a dirge over their graves.

The cross, while realizing that it is not one of the human retainers, continues to present its story as if it were. The disciples leave, but the cross, still grieving, remains by its Lord. This identification of the cross with the human retainers of Christ is for the benefit of the visionary. The cross moves from being a spectator in the drama of the crucifixion to being a participant in the agony of Christ. In doing so, the exilic state changes again: the cross is no longer without a lord. By joining in Christ's agony, it personally regains the favour of the Lord, but since the Judgement Day has not yet come, it must still suffer with fallen creation. Christ's agony is caused by men who have renounced their proper Lord and accepted the lordship of Satan. Having set itself in opposition to the dryht of hell, the cross undergoes suffering that closely parallels that of Christ:

Pa us man fyllan ongan

ealle to eorðan. Pæt wæs egeslic wyrd!
Bedealf us man on deopan seape.
(73b-75a)

Then men began
To cut us down. That was a dreadful fate.
In a deep pit they buried us.

The fyllan of line 73 echoes the cyninges fyll of line 56. Like the Saviour, the cross is buried. The cross shows the visionary that the perverse dryht of earth deals severely with those who have proclaimed their allegiance to the Lord. But the cross also shows the visionary that glory awaits those who suffer for the Lord. This justifies the identification of the cross as human, for it suffers exile, pain, and is glorified by God in the end. So the visionary, should he be willing to suffer, may also be glorified.

Evidently the example of the cross is effective because when the visionary becomes the speaker of the poem again, he has made the same spiritual journey that the cross has made. The spectator of lines 3 to 27 becomes one of the retainers of the Lord. His future, like the cross's, is one of pilgrimage through the life still tied to fallen creation while his soul is committed in loyalty to the Lord. Though living, Christ is still absent, and the poet, longing to depart, laments his lot on earth without his Lord:

Wæs modsefa
afysed on forðwege, feala ealra gebad
langunghwila. (124b-126a)

my spirit was inspired
With keenness for departure; and I spent
Much time in longing.

J.V. Fleming interprets langunghwila as the accidia of the monastic life. The poet, he claims, is a monk suffering from the spiritual desert that sometimes overtakes those who have dedicated their lives to holiness. As a cure for this malady, the vision of the cross renews the monk's purpose and consecration.[24] But this seems too specialized an interpretation, for the langunghwila can just as easily be ascribed to the believer who longs to leave earth to be with his Lord. One finds the basis for the desire to be with Christ more readily in St. John the Divine's plea in Revelation 22:20, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus," which is the prayer of the devout believer. Restricting the poem to those with a definite spiritual vocation limits the universality that the poem retains with the alternate interpretation. Dorothy Whitelock's interpretation of The Seafarer as peregrinus[25] has some relevance in this connection. She proves that the custom of leaving one's native land to mortify temporal yearnings or to go on pilgrimages was common to all stations of Anglo-Saxon society. Men and women left their homes and possessions in order to gain merit for eternity. While there is no direct evidence that the visionary is a peregrinus, the same kind of longing that motivated those who left their familiar haunts motivates the Rood-poet's longing for heaven.

The poet follows the expression of yearning with an elegiac passage that is one of the most lyrical in the Old

English language. It gives the reason for his yearning to gain the perfect dryht of heaven:

> Nah ic ricra feala
> freonda on foldan, ac hie forð heonon
> gewiton of worulde dreamum, sohton him
> wuldres cyning,
> lifiaþ nu on heofenum mid heahfædere,
> wuniaþ on wuldre, ond ic wene me
> daga gehwylce hwænne me dryhtnes rod,
> þe ic her on eorðan ær sceawode,
> on þysson lænan life gefetige
> ond me þonne gebringe þær is blis mycel,
> dream on heofonum, þær is dryhtnes folc
> geseted to symle, þær is singal blis,
> ond me þonne asette þær ic syþþan mot
> wunian on wuldre, well mid þam halgum
> dreames brucan. (131b-144a)

> I have on earth
> Not many noble friends, but they have gone
> Hence from earth's joys and sought the King of glory.
> With the High Father now they live in heaven
> And dwell in glory; and I wait each day
> For when the cross of God, which here on earth
> I formerly beheld, may fetch me from
> This transitory life and carry me
> To where there is great bliss and joy in heaven,
> Where the Lord's host is seated at the feast,
> And it shall set me where I afterwards
> May dwell in glory, live in lasting bliss
> Among the saints.

Up to this point, the poet has used a rather allusive style to talk about exile. As is common in Old English literature, the spiritual plight of the visionary is under- rather than overstated by the use of contained rather than expansive allusions to darkness and sorrow. The cross's exile is depicted more by key words and description of situation than by traditional full-length treatment. In this passage, however, the diction approaches the formulaic more nearly than elsewhere in the poem. The poet's lamenting the

absence of rich friends reminds one of the Wanderer grieving for his dead hall-companions. The loss of joy is a concept expressive of the exilic state. Grendel is dreamum bedæled 'deprived of joys'(Bwf.721a); the Wanderer complains that Wyn eall gedreas! 'All joy passes!'(Wan.36b); the Rood-poet says that his friends gewiton of worulde dreamum 'have gone hence from earth's joys.' In the manner of true elegy, the poet looks back through his despondency to the glory of his vision of the cross and wishes to re-capture the rapture of that experience by leaving the life here on earth, the langunghwila, to journey to the place which will complete his joy. Although the passage is elegiac, it does exhibit important differences when compared with elegies like Deor and The Wanderer. Both of these poems exhibit a stoicism that the Dream of the Rood lacks. The stoical acceptance of life here on earth is not so much missing as disregarded with the one reference to langunghwila. The visionary has a clear idea of future joys only alluded to in The Wanderer. The Rood-poet's usual allusive style gives way in this passage to an expansion of his idea of the joys of heaven, and his yearning for them is evident in every half-line. Whereas conventional elegy laments the transitory nature of life and, even more, that of happiness, the Rood-poet rejoices that life is fleeting. When death comes, the believers that constitute the dryht of heaven will be fetched to join the Lord in whose presence they will have perpetual

joy.

While this last elegiac passage is not the end of the poem, it illustrates the last instance of the kind of imagery which has been the subject of this chapter. The poet has depicted different levels of exile, ranging from the spiritual exile of the visionary at the beginning of the poem, through the cross's physical exile as a result of the Lord's death, to the visionary's exile away from heaven, but in relationship with God. The cross's exile is necessary to show the visionary the remedy for his spiritual condition, and the visionary's langunghwila are a result of the time-lapse between the crucifixion and Doomsday. The Rood-poet has taken the Anglo-Saxon concept of exile and expanded it to make the visionary's spiritual condition comprehensible to the Anglo-Saxon audience.

The cross and the visionary are both involved in exile imagery by virtue of being part of fallen creation. The other main character of the poem, Christ, has no direct connection with the imagery of exile and darkness, although, as will be seen later, he is, ironically, also an exile. Theologically, this is sound, since Christ as perfect God-man remains untouched by the perversions of fallen creation. It is entirely appropriate that the frean mancynnes should be central to the image patterns which find their focus in the cross resplendent, the other half of the basic contrast in the Dream of the Rood and the subject of the next chapter.

Chapter III:

The Splendent Cross as Symbol of Heroism

The splendent cross stands in absolute contrast to the stained cross. Surrounded by light, and shining with glory both literal and figurative, the splendent cross throws the darkness symbolized by the stained cross into high relief, at the same time dispelling it.

Just as the imagery of darkness plays an important part in making the theme of exile concrete, so the imagery of light is important in expressing the hope of community. The poet is in darkness, in the middle of the night, separated from the rest of men, when he is visited by the sight of the glorious cross. It is leohte bewunden,/beama beorhtost 'suffused with light,/Brightest of beams'(5b-6a). The poet goes on to stress that, in contrast to the solitary visionary, the whole host of heaven gazes at this tree:

> Beheoldon þær engel dryhtnes
> ealle,
> fægere þurh forðgesceaft. Ne wæs ðær huru
> fracodes gealga,
> ac hine þær beheoldon halige gastas,
> men ofer moldan, ond eall þeos mære gesceaft.
> (9b-12)

> Many bands of angels,
> Fair throughout all eternity, looked on.
> No felon's gallows that, but holy spirits,
> Mankind, and all this marvellous creation,
> Gazed on the glorious tree of victory.

Thus, early in the poem, the idea of a community which has some unity of purpose is impressed on the poet's and the

audience's consciousness. The Anglo-Saxon concept of community is the comitatus, the band of men tied to each other and to their lord by bonds of loyalty. Comitatus focuses on the hall, which is characterized by the presence of light, warmth, the giving and receiving of treasure, companionship, song and harmony. This association of light and community is not unique to the Dream of the Rood. R.J.S. Grant shows that, in Beowulf, light, the contained warmth of the hearth fire and the stability of land represent the positive forces in the poem.[1] Thus the poet extends the ideal connoted by the life of the comitatus when he pictures the angels in heaven surrounded by light and engaged in a common occupation, and provides a meaningful contrast to the dark and lonely condition of the visionary.

Bearing in mind this association of light and community, one finds that, by the fifteenth line, the cross has become a source of light. It moves from being leohte bewunden 'suffused with light'(5b) to wynnum scinan '[shining joyfully]'(15b). This idea is picked up later in the poem when the poet characterizes the cross as a guide to the heavenly community. The image of the lucent guide acting as a source of light in the poet's darkness is repeated in the crucifixion scene:

> Pystro hæfdon
> bewrigen mid wolcnum wealdendes hræw
> scirne sciman, sceadu forðeode,
> wann under wolcnum. (52b-55a)

> Darkness covered the Ruler's corpse with clouds,
> His shining beauty; shadows passed across,
> Black in the darkness.

The body of the Lord of mankind lights creation's darkness just as the cross lights the poet's darkness. The connection that has been made between light and community in the first part of the poem is used here to provide a gleam of hope in the midst of the profound darkness surrounding the crucifixion.

The light imagery is continued by the poet's repeated use of the word wuldor, or glory, throughout the poem. The poet equates light and glory when he says that he saw wuldres treow,/ wædum geweorðode, wynnum scinan 'the tree of glory brightly shine/ In gorgeous clothing'(14b-15). In every case, the form of wuldor used refers to heaven, either directly or indirectly. The obvious association of light with wuldor emphasizes the perpetual day that reigns in heaven; and where light reigns, a sense of community is present. In the last twenty-six lines of the Dream of the Rood, the poet uses some form of wuldor four times, thus recalling the light that emanates from the wuldres treow in the fourteenth line. The light so prevalent in the poem and tied to the adoring community of heaven leads naturally into a study of the kind of community the poet sees as desirable. For further illustration of this point we must turn to a study of Old English poetry outside the Dream of the Rood.

In the image patterns that find their symbol in the

splendent cross, the elements of heroic imagery play an important part. Whether or not heroic poetry is based in reality will never be fully known. What is known, however, is the metaphoric function which heroic imagery performs; in Old English poetry it expresses the ideal of a man in his society. Cherniss calls these heroic concepts "pre-Christian" and states that "they have their roots in an originally pagan tradition and . . . constitute the social morality which informs that tradition."[2] The poetry reflects the way Anglo-Saxons thought their society should function. With the coming of Christianity, the heroic ideal began to change. Cherniss argues that the heroic ideal and Christianity are, for the most part, mutually exclusive, and devotes his book Ingeld and Christ, to a study of the opposition between Christian and heroic concepts and values.[3] This view, I think, is too rigid. The spirit of accommodation expressed in Pope Gregory's letter operated for the heroic mode of expression just as it did for other aspects of Anglo-Saxon society. Those elements of the heroic ideal suited to the needs of the growing faith were adopted, and those that could not be adopted completely were transmuted. The most successful Old English fusion of heroic tradition and Christian expression is the Dream of the Rood. The poet shows much sensitivity and respect for the heroic mode of expression and has taken pains to fuse it positively into the explicitly Christian exhortation of the poem. The splendent cross is

the culmination of the positive in the poem, just as the stained cross is the culmination of the imagery of exile.

In trying to see what the poet does with heroic diction, it is helpful to see what constitutes heroism in Old English literature. No one any longer disputes that Beowulf, in some senses, is Christian, but that work still helps to illustrate the environment and behaviour of a hero not so explicitly Christian as Andreas or Judith. In the context of his society, Beowulf himself illustrates all the characteristics of a true hero, both as a leader of his own band of men and as a retainer in the band of Hygelac.

The society which gave birth to a hero was, in return, held together by him. As already briefly mentioned, the comitatus[4] was the focal point of Anglo-Saxon society. The members of the comitatus took an oath of loyalty to their leader and to each other, and the leader had reciprocal responsibilities to his men. The tribe was strong and stable when a leader led a strong comitatus. Both Hroðgar and Beowulf state that they have reigned for fifty years in peace. When the leader dies or is killed, however, the comitatus fragments unless another leader steps into his place. This is the plight of the Geats at the end of Beowulf. There is no one to take Beowulf's place and Wiglaf prophesies that the end of the Geatish nation is close at hand.

The qualities of the heroic leader are those which enable him to gain and keep the allegiance of men. One of

the most important of these is generosity. This attribute is mentioned again and again in Old English poetry. In the genealogy that opens Beowulf, all the kings are characterized as open-handed givers of treasure. Scyld is called a beaga brytta 'dispenser of rings'(Bwf.35a); the poet commends Scyld's son, Beowulf, for his generous impulses and prophesies that the comitatus will be loyal in troublesome times because of the glorious gifts its members have received; Healfdene rules the people graciously. Hroðgar is the best example of all; he builds Heorot and when it is finished, it becomes the center of the comitatus, the place where treasure is given and received. Hroðgar emphasizes the importance of generosity by warning Beowulf against greed. Heremod, states Hroðgar, shows how a king ought not to act. In a passage lamenting the evil that Heremod brought on his people, his stinginess plays an important role: Nallas beagas geaf/ Denum æfter dome 'Not at all did he give rings to the Danes, as was customary'(Bwf.1719b-1720a). Beowulf, on the other hand, is not at all stingy. On embarkation to the court of Hygelac, for instance, he bestows a sword on the thane who guards his ship:

> He þæm batwearde bunden golde
> swurd gesealde, þæt he syðþan wæs
> on meadubence maþme þy weorþra,
> yrfelafe. (Bwf.1900-1903a)

He gave the boat-warden a gold-bound sword, so that afterward on the mead-bench, he was the worthier by the gift of that treasure.

This gift from Beowulf exhibits another aspect of the giving of treasure. The receiver of treasure is honoured and gains fame by the possession of it. The leader who gives his men rich gifts allows them to gain fame in this way, and exhibits the right kind of generosity. He shows that he is secure enough in his own prowess and fame not be begrudge his followers the rewards of successful military endeavour.

The exhibition of courage in the undertaking of deeds worthy of note is another important heroic trait. Beowulf shows this kind of courage throughout. He hears of Grendel and comes to do battle with him; he completes the task by killing Grendel's dam; and even in old age, he still displays heroic courage in his decision to meet the dragon which is harassing his people. With courage must come gentleness. Almost the last description of Beowulf stresses his mildness:

> Swa begnornodon Geata leode
> hlafordes hryre, hearðgeneatas,
> cwædon pæt he wære wyruldcyninga
> manna mildust ond monðwærust,
> leodum liðost ond lofgeornost.
> (Bwf. 3178-3182)

> In such a way the people of the Geats, his retainers, grieved the fall of their lord, said that of the kings of the world, he was the mildest of men, and most kindly, most gentle to the people, and most eager for praise.

This passage also contains a trait emphasized throughout Beowulf, the desire for fame and glory. Beowulf himself asserts that the achievement of fame is the noblest of goals for a warrior to have gained before he dies:

> "Ure æghwylc sceal ende gebidan
> worolde lifes; wyrce se þe mote
> domes ær deaþe; þæt bið drihtguman
> unlifgendum æfter selest."
> (Bwf.1386-1389)

> Each one of us must expect the end of this world's life, let him achieve who can glory before death; that is most excellent for a warrior after life is over.

Since fame and glory are of ultimate value, all the other heroic attributes must be cultivated in order to add to the hero's dom.

The qualities of a retainer are, for the most part, those of a leader somewhat modified. The need for courage and the desire for fame, gained by performing mighty acts and by receiving treasure in return for brave deeds, resides in both leader and retainer; the retainer must also exhibit loyalty and its attendant quality, obedience. As Hygelac's follower, Beowulf exhibits these qualities. The gifts which he receives from Hroðgar are given to Hygelac when Beowulf returns to the Geatish court. In the war against the Frisians, Beowulf moves in the van of the fight. After Hygelac's slaying, Beowulf performs his duty in avenging his lord's death. This quality of loyalty is exhibited most forcefully in the Battle of Maldon and in the Cynewulf-Cyneheard epfsode in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle for 757 A.D. In the Battle of Maldon, the Anglo-Saxon ideal of loyalty to one's lord even in the face of overwhelming odds is set out in the moving and unforgettable speech of Byrhtwold:

"Hige sceal þe heardra, heorte þe cenre,
mod sceal þe mare, þe ure mægen lytlað.
Her lið ure ealdor eall forheawen,
god on greote. A mæg gnornian
se ðe nu fram þis wigplegan wendan penceð.
Iceom frod feores; fram ic ne wille,
ac ic me be healfe minum hlaforde,
be swa leofan men, licgan pence."
(Mal.312-319)

'Mind must be the harder, heart the keener, courage must be the greater as our strength wanes. Here lies our leader, all slaughtered in battle, good on the ground. Ever may he be remorseful who thinks to turn now from this battle-play. I am aged in years; I will not go from here, but am determined to lie by the side of my lord, by that so beloved man.'

The situation in the Cynewulf-Cyneheard episode is even more painful. The warriors in the battle at Maldon are fighting the Vikings, and avenging their lord's death is a deed demanded of their loyalty. In the Cynewulf-Cyneheard story, avenging one's lord means fighting kinsmen, but Cynewulf's men say that no kinsman is dearer than their lord and hie næfre his banan folgian nolden.'they would never follow his slayer.'[5] The Anglo-Saxons placed the highest value on loyalty.

These, then, are the qualities of heroism with which the Rood-poet assumes his audience to be familiar. In Old English poetry, these concepts are expressed by words and phrases that recur throughout the canon. A chart[6] follows which lists synonyms for various concepts which are especially relevant to the Dream of the Rood. This list, intended only as a guide, is not comprehensive:

Lord: dryhten, cyning, ealdor, hlaford, frea, peoden, æðeling

Retainers: hilderinc, þegn, weorod, hæleð

Protection: mundbyrd

Treasure: sinc, gold, seolfor, gimm, beag

Light: leoht, beorht, scinan, beacen, beam

Joy, Revelry: dream, wynn, symbel, brucan, bliss

Glory, Fame: dom, þrymm, wuldor

Native land: epel

The first sight of the cross brings to mind all the associations with the giving of treasure that the Anglo-Saxon audience would associate with such a splendid artifact. Indeed, seeing only the syllicre treow 'wondrous tree'(4b), they might think that it was some treasure given as a reward to a courageous hero:

> Puhte me þæt ic gesawe syllicre treow
> on lyft lædan, leohte bewunden,
> beama beorhtost. Eall þæt beacen wæs
> begoten mid golde. Gimmas stodon
> fægere æt foldan sceatum, swylce þær fife wæron
> uppe on þam eaxlegespanne. (4-9a)

> It was as though I saw a wondrous tree
> Towering in the sky suffused with light,
> Brightest of beams; and all that beacon was
> Covered with gold. The corners of the earth
> gleamed with fair jewels, just as there were five
> Upon the [shoulder-span].

As seen from the chart, this passage is rich in the vocabulary of treasure. The heroic connotations of treasure are obvious, and the conventional light imagery carries heroic overtones because of its associations with the life of the dryht, as evidenced by the link already discussed between

light and community. In his interpretation of Old English poetry, Lee characterizes heaven as the perfect dryht, earth as the dryht that can imitate either heaven or hell, and hell as the anti-dryht.[7] In the light of his analysis, these positive attributes of treasure, light and warmth indicate that in this poetic situation there are glimmers of the ideal dryht of heaven.

The emphasis on the light surrounding the tree and on treasures adorning it are reminiscent of the reward due a loyal retainer. Indeed, the major impact of the first twenty-seven lines is almost exclusively that of the adorned tree, adorned in a manner worthy of the greatest hero imaginable. This beautification of the tree works in two ways. In the first and most obvious way, it makes worthy the cross which it beautifies, just as the warrior who receives rewards is wealthier in the possession of them. But in the context of a retainer's reward, the bestowing of such a rich treasure proclaims the intrinsic worth of the recipient, not just the wealth bestowed by the giving of the artifact. As Cherniss remarks, the "function of treasure [is] . . . the material manifestation of the moral worth and virtue of its possessor."[8] Having been made so aware of the cross's worth, the audience would immediately assume that the hero who received such a treasure must be a great and good man indeed. When, therefore, the cross is personified in the next section, the audience would realize with a jolt that

the cross is the hero that has been so honoured, and would await the revelation of what this personified tree did to deserve such a reward.

In fulfillment of the expectation, the cross tells its own story. It identifies the man who wishes to ascend it as the frean mancynnes 'Lord of mankind'(33b), and in so doing, personifies itself as a retainer of that Lord. The cross proceeds to explain its rich trappings. In this section, the poet expands the heroic tradition from within. He fuses a new definition of heroic conduct with the traditional diction of heroism to make his audience understand a profound spiritual truth.

At first the cross is like the visionary at the beginning of the poem. Like him it merely sees the Lord of mankind hastening toward it to ascend it. But suddenly, from the thirty-fifth line onwards, understanding comes with a shock: the cross has become a loyal and obedient retainer of the frean mancynnes. Before, it was a part of the created order, but now it is a committed follower of the Lord of mankind. As a loyal retainer, the cross obeys its Lord's commands, but in doing so neglects, albeit very unwillingly, its responsibility to avenge its Lord. In the Battle of Maldon, Byrhtnoth's men fight together with him, and when he finally dies, fight on to avenge their lord. But that situation is diametrically opposed to the problem that the cross

faces in the Dream of the Rood:

> Pær ic þa ne dorste ofer dryhtnes word
> bugan oððe berstan, þa ic bifian geseah
> eorðan sceatas. Ealle ic mihte
> feondas gefyllan, hwæðre ic fæste stod.
> (35-38a)

> I durst not against God's word
> Bend down or break, when I saw tremble all
> The surface of the earth. Although I might
> Have struck down all the foes, yet stood I fast.

These lines clearly express the cross's dilemma; as a loyal thane, its duty is clearly to bow before its Lord and to fell his enemies, but as an obedient thane, it must stand fast.

With the cross's dilemma unresolved, the poet turns to the warrior-hero:

> Ongyrede hine þa geong hæleð, (þæt wæs god ælmihtig),
> strang ond stiðmod. Gestah he on gealgan heanne,
> modig on manigra gesyhðe, þa he wolde mancyn lysan.
> (39-41)

> Then the young hero (who was God Almighty)
> [stripped himself], resolute and strong in heart.
> He climbed onto the lofty gallows-tree,
> Bold in the sight of many watching men,
> When He intended to [loose] mankind.

In a perceptive article, C.J. Wolf[9] argues convincingly that this whole passage is couched in traditional heroic language. The type-scene of preparation for battle and the theme of hero-on-the-beach are found, says Wolf, in the poet's treatment of the crucifixion and burial. The extended type-scenes of the preparation-for-battle found in Beowulf or in the Battle of Maldon are missing in the Dream of the Rood, but

the poet evokes all the connotations of preparation for battle in the half-line Ongyrede hine pa geong hæleð 'Then the young hero . . . stripped himself'(39a). While Wolf's article establishes that this passage is actually heroic in tone, it does not deal with the manner in which, nor the reason for which, the poet uses heroic diction. A close examination shows just how appropriate is the use of the heroic mode.

These lines make clear the reason for the cross's dilemma, and the only possible response to that dilemma. Several times the cross has been described as gyrwed or adorned. In this passage the same verb, but with the negative prefix on- shows the connection between the two acts. The Lord of mankind actually "unadorns" himself in order that creation, of which the cross is representative, may be freed.[10] This passage echoes a passage in Beowulf. Beowulf strips himself of his armour in his match against Grendel, a physical foe, but also a representative of the powers of evil. Physical armour is of no avail in a battle against spiritual enemies. Instead of arming his hero in the traditional preparation-for-battle scene,[11] the Rood-poet uses all the same associations of preparing for battle to show that the battle that God almighty wages is of a different order than the wars where arming oneself constitutes the appropriate thing to do. The strategy of this battle is not attack, rather voluntary self-sacrifice. Because the battle

strategy differs, therefore, the cross's traditional response of defense is not adequate. The only proper resolution to its dilemma in this new situation lies in the basic heroic response of obedience to one's leader.

For the Old English audience, Christ's action must have seemed like a capitulation to the enemy in much the same way that Byrhtnoth's permitting the Vikings to cross the causeway gives in to his ofermod 'pride.' To give the enemy an advantage in the way that the Lord of mankind does here seems the height of folly, but in this paradox the poet expands the heroic ideal. The warrior-hero has all the right qualifications: he is strang ond stiðmod, modig and the task, the freeing of mankind, is surely worthy of his effort. Indeed, his very names throughout the poem proclaim him as both hero and Lord: dryhten 'lord'(9b,35b,76b,101b, 105b,113a,136b,140b,144b); frean mancynnes 'lord of mankind' (33b); hæleð 'hero'(39a); cyning 'king'(44b,56b,133b); hlaford 'chief'(45a); weruda god 'God of hosts'(51b); æðeling 'prince'(58a); ealdor 'leader'(90b) and peoden 'master'(69a). Instead of conquering by force, however, conquest can be achieved only by voluntary self-sacrifice. The poet introduces two elements to the heroic ideal in this passage. The concept of a spiritual battle as worthy of the hero expands the nature of the conflicts in which the hero can engage. By showing that conquest in such a battle comes, at times, by self-sacrifice, the poet gives the heroic

ideal the means to fight such a battle.

The poet takes care not to overload his audience. Having brought its members to a new awareness of what Christ did on the cross, all the while using familiar literary forms, he turns again to the retainer-hero, the cross. The cross reiterates its desire to bow before the Lord and its inability to counter its Lord's will:

> Bifode ic þa me se beorn ymbclypte. Ne dorste
> ic hwæðre bugan to eorðan,
> feallan to foldan sceatum, ac ic sceolde
> fæste standan.
> Rod wæs ic aræred. Ahof ic ricne cyning,
> heofona hlaford, hyldan me ne dorste.
> (42-45)

> I trembled as the warrior embraced me.
> But still I dared not bend down to the earth,
> Fall to the ground. Upright I had to stand.
> A rood I was raised up; and I held high
> The noble King, the Lord of heaven above.

The cross is identified with Christ in that both of them are raised up; the cross's obedience finds its reason in this identification with the heroic deed of the Lord of mankind. This passage has led some critics, notably Canuteson, into difficulty. Canuteson argues that the cross is female, and not only female but a "demure" maiden at that.[12] He bases this contention on the cross's trembling as the Son climbs onto "her." Wolf, on the other hand more credibly, sees this same passage as proof of the intensity of the lord-retainer relationship and cites the Wanderer's desire to embrace his lord as supportive evidence for her contention.[13] In view of the passages personifying the cross as the

retainer obeying his lord, Canuteson's interpretation of the Dream of the Rood as an elaborate marriage metaphor, with this scene as the consummation of that marriage, seems far-fetched and totally irrelevant. To make the leap from this interpretation to the marriage feast of the Lamb in Revelation and to use the reference to feasting (141a) as corroborative evidence of the basic contention seems critically indefensible. The cross is not female; it is not symbolic of the Bride of Christ, the church, and this scene is not a consummation of the marriage. Through the deed accomplished on it, the cross provides the means by which mankind, represented by the visionary, can come to be identified with Christ so that the feast mentioned at the end of the Dream of the Rood can become an actuality.

The cross goes on to make its identification with the crucified Lord still more complete:

> Ne dorste ic hira nænigum
> sceððan.
> Bysmeredon hie unc butu ætgædere. Eall ic wæs
> mid blode bestemed,
> begoten of pæs guman sidan, siððan he hæfde
> his gast onsended.
> (47b-49)

> Yet might I
> Not harm them. They reviled us both together.
> I was made wet all over with the blood
> Which poured out from His side, after He had
> Sent forth His spirit.

As Burrow explains, the cross takes on the Saviour's powers at this point: "It was Christ who could have struck down his enemies, and Christ who could have refused the ordeal, if he

had not willed it otherwise."[14] The cross is a surrogate for Christ in the sense that it describes his suffering as its own. Burrow and Woolf[15] seem to suggest that the cross takes on the suffering of Christ so that the audience will somehow forget that Christ was the actual sufferer. This does not seem to me accurate. The cross is not a surrogate sufferer, but a participating sufferer in the heroic task.

At this point in the poem the heroic and exilic image patterns begin to overlap in a way that makes it impossible to talk about them separately. Suffering is necessary if the heroic task is to be accomplished. This multiplicity of meanings brings visionary, cross and Saviour into the kind of identification that is, in the final analysis, the point of the poem. As we have seen in the first chapter, the cross and the visionary are closely identified as both suffer in a state of exile. Here the cross is identified with Christ by aiding him in accomplishing mankind's redemption. If the representative of fallen creation can make the transition from exile to identification with the Lord, then perhaps the representative of fallen humanity can make the same transition. The close identification of the cross with Christ in this passage makes that question inevitable and provides a glimmer of hope that the answer is affirmative. The poet re-emphasizes the voluntary nature of Christ's heroic deed by stating that he sends forth his spirit. Death cannot seize him; rather he chooses the moment of his own death,

showing his power over death and the powers of evil which death metaphorically represents.

Heroic and exilic imagery are still superimposed on each other when the Rood-poet expands the retainer-hero's responses to the crucifixion to include the troop's responses. This passage of ritual burial has been discussed from the point of view of exile imagery in the last chapter. But the poet makes it serve a double function and it contains the essence of the hero-on-the-beach theme. Wolf contends that the burial scene answers all the requirements of the traditional scene of the hero on the beach.[16]

Ongunnon him þa moldern wyrcan
beornas on bânan gesyhðe; curfon hie ðæt of beorhtan stane,
gesetton hie ðæron sigora wealdend.
(65b-67a)

The men then made a sepulchre for Him
In sight of me. They carved it of bright stone,
And set therein the Lord of victories.

The traditional hero-on-the-beach theme requires that the hero have started or ended a journey, or that he be caught between two kinds of experience, and that a light be present. Christ is described as the ruler of victories and that establishes his heroism; he is lying, limb-weary, in the sepulchre, between life and death and so fulfills all the criteria for being between two worlds. The bright stone of the grave satisfies the need for a flashing light. Christ has just finished his sojourn on earth and is preparing for

his journey back to heaven.

Another element of this ritual burial is found in the troop's loyalty to their leader. The interment of Christ is the last act of loyalty that the disciples can perform for their Lord. In doing so, they exhibit the loyalty expected of them. The poet has departed slightly from strict heroic tradition, however. Since their Lord died in battle, the retainers should seek vengeance for his death, but they do not, and nothing in the diction of this passage suggests censure of their actions. By omitting the desire for vengeance, the poet emphasizes the solitary nature of the confrontation between Christ and death. He drives home the fact that each individual must fight that same battle for himself, just as Christ and the cross did. Since vengeance is not part of the Christian code of ethics, the omission of it from the cross's and disciples' responses strengthens the expansion of the heroic ideal. The new ethic of "turning the other cheek" requires infinitely more self-discipline and courage than the old vengeful one. In emphasizing the troop's and the cross's loyalty, on the other hand, the poet implants in his audience's mind the idea that the total loyalty and unquestioning obedience that traditionally belong to the temporal lord properly belong to the Lord of mankind.

The cross returns to its own plight and reiterates that it also mourns, even after the human retainers leave. Then, quickly recounting its own "death" and "burial," it

moves into an account of its own adorning by the faithful thanes of the Lord. The Rood-poet telescopes the three hundred years of history between the crucfixion and the Invention of the cross into fewer than five lines of poetry:

> Hwæðre me pær dryhtnes pegnas,
> freondas gefrunon,
> ond gyredon me golde ond seolfre.
> (75b-77)
>
> But friends
> And servants of the Lord learnt where I was,
> And decorated me with gold and silver.

Here the verb gyredon(77a)echoes gegyred(16a), gegyrwed(23b) in the first part of the poem and ongyrede(39a) in the second. Clearly Christ's kenosis is closely related to the cross's exaltation. The cross, having suffered like Christ, is now exalted like him. The loyal retainer is released from its exile, taken under the protection of its risen Lord and given the rewards that befit faithful service. Henceforth, the cross is victorious, as noted by the use of sige-(13a,127a) as the first part of the compounds used to describe it. It joins the ruler of victories in his conquest of death. The shining cross of the initial vision is explained and the audience learns why the cross has been so honoured.

With this, the cross's account of its experiences ends and its exhortation to the visionary begins. The stained and sinful poet has already begun to make the journey that the cross has made and thus can deservedly be called hæleð min se leofa 'my beloved hero'(78b, 95b). This

reference immediately identifies the poet with Christ, who has also been called hæleð(39a) at the time when he was preparing for his mighty deed, but the identification is still, at this point, potential and not actual. The identification brings the audience to an awareness that the visionary will also do mighty deeds, since he is also a hæleð.[17]

The cross has still another function, that of evangelism, and it is in fulfilling this function that the poet makes a very interesting use of the heroic tradition. Three passages serve as the basis for discussion of this use of the heroic ideal.

Is nu sæl cumen
pæt me weorðiað wide ond side
menn ofer moldan, ond eall þeos mære gesceaft,
gebiddap him to þyssum beacne. On me bearn godes
prowode hwile. Forþan ic prymfæst nu
hlifige under heofenum, ond ic hælan mæg
ægHwylcne anra, þara þe him bið egesa to me.
. . . . . .
Hwæt, me þa geweorðode wuldres ealdor
ofer holmwudu, heofonrices weard!
Swylce swa he his modor eac, Marian sylfe,
ælmihtig god for ealle menn
geweorðode ofer eall wifa cynn.
Nu ic þe hate, hæleð min se leofa,
pæt ðu þas gesyhðe secge mannum,
onwreoh wordum - pæt hit is wuldres beam,
se ðe ælmihtig god on prowode
for mancynnes manegum synnum,
ond Adomes ealdgewyrhtum.
. . . . . .
Ne þearf ðær ponne ænig anforht wesan
þe him ær in breostum bereð beacna selest,
ac ðurh ða rode sceal rice gesecan
of eorðwege æghwylc sawl,
seo þe mid wealdende wunian penceð."
(80b-86,90-100,117-121)

Now the time has come

That far and wide on earth men honour me,
And all this great and glorious creation,
And to this beacon offer prayers. On me
The Son of God once suffered; therefore now
I tower mighty underneath the heavens,
And I may heal all those in awe of me.
. . . . . .
So then the Prince of glory honoured me,
And heaven's King exalted me above
All other trees, just as Almighty God
Raised up His mother Mary for all men
Above all other women in the world.
Now, my [beloved hero], I order you
That you reveal this vision to mankind,
Declare in words this is the tree of glory
On which Almighty God once suffered torments
For mankind's many sins, and for the deeds
Of Adam long ago.
. . . . . .
But there need none
Be fearful if he bears upon his breast
The best of tokens. Through the cross each soul
May journey to the heavens from this earth,
Who with the Ruler thinks to go and dwell.'

These lines close the cross's exhortation to the visionary. They contain, in summary, all that has gone before. The first lines correspond with the first vision of the angels contemplating the glorious cross but are expanded like those lines to include "all this great and glorious creation," which repeats exactly the twelfth line. Even more than that, the cross, in the manner of the traditional hero, declares its fame: "That far and wide on earth men honour me." The cross goes on to give the reason for its fame, the accomplishment with Christ of the heroic task. Because it has aided in the mighty deed of redeeming mankind, it now has the power to continue that process. The cross says that it can <u>hælan</u> 'heal'(85b), recalling that the poet has called

Christ the hælend 'healer'(25b). The cross compares itself with Mary, the mother of Christ, in that both have borne Christ. Having submitted, they have been honoured above others of their kind for their part in correcting Adomes ealdgewyrhtum 'the deeds of Adam long ago'(100). The command of the cross to the visionary to declare this sight to all men re-emphasizes the cross's analysis of its fame. But the cross's desire for fame is not quite like Beowulf's. Unlike Beowulf, the cross desires fame so that it can increase the glory of God; the cross never arrogates to itself the actual redemptive work that Christ accomplished on it. Its function, as will be seen in the next chapter, lies in lighting the way to Christ. The cross's desire for fame is comparable to that of Andreas. The desire is real enough, but not selfish or egocentric since it points to Christ. The object of the cross's desire for fame is made clear in the last section quoted above in which the cross is subtly characterized as the leader of its own troop. The cross's troop is composed of those who bear "this most excellent beacon" in or on their breasts. There is some question as to whether the poet means in breostum as "in their breast" or "on their breast." I prefer the metaphorical meaning of "in their breast" as it gives the poem a greater universality; "on their breast" seems to indicate the pectoral crosses worn by priests, and such an interpretation limits the universality of the poem.

But the cross's troop is actually God's troop; and the cross is literally a beacon. In the same way as the cross says that it could have felled the enemies, so it implies that the people who bear its sign are its followers. J.V. Fleming disagrees with such an interpretation and concurs with Rosemary Woolf that this passage is a total inversion of the heroic tradition since mankind is asked to follow its Lord's bana. It is, Fleming says, "the blasphemy of Christians."[18] To my mind, this view is only partly accurate. It is quite true that the cross is the instrument of Christ's death. As such, to follow it would be unthinkable, as can be seen from the responses of Cynewulf's men in the Cynewulf-Cyneheard story. But it seems to me that the poet has not inverted but expanded the heroic ideal to include new elements. Just as he expands the definition of the heroic battle to include spiritual warfare without physical weapons, so he expands the idea that the cross as instrument of death is also a hero in that it follows the Lord's command. Surely the paradox of losing one's life to gain it, found in Christ's parable of the grain of wheat, is appropriate here. The cross has submitted to ignominy for the sake of its Lord and consequently is honoured. This must be the interpretation which is meant to be placed on the cross's rich trappings; otherwise, an element of cynicism totally foreign to the poet's purpose creeps in. If the audience is to think of the cross as slayer, its trappings

indicate that rewards accrue to evil deeds. The cross is adorned because it is a hero; it is a hero because it obeys its Lord implicitly; as a hero, it deserves fame and the opportunity to lead its own band, and the cross does exactly that.

With this exposition of the cross's final status, the visionary again begins to speak, and we find that he indeed deserves the title of hæleð because he has become a member of the cross's troop. Blithe in heart and with great eagerness, he prays to the cross(122), and only a few lines farther on, he acknowledges his allegiance: min mundbyrd is/ geriht to pære rode 'my hope for [protection]/Is turned towards the cross'(130b-131a). As an obedient retainer, he carried out his lord's command of telling his vision, and in doing so he becomes the scop who sings the fame of the cross and Christ.

In a passage that combines heroic and exilic imagery again, the poet expresses his yearning to recapture the joy of his vision and,better still, to escape this lænan life 'transitory life'(138) for the joys of heaven. His idea of heaven is expressed in the words of Old English hall imagery. The following passage from Beowulf expresses the essence of the hall-joys of the comitatus, the place of greatest happiness for the Anglo-Saxon warrior. Having ordered the building of a great hall, Hroðgar awaits its completion:

healærna mæst; scop him Heort naman
se þe his wordes geweald wide hæfde.
He beot ne aleh. beagas dælde,
sinc æt symle.

. . .

þær wæs hearpan sweg,
swutol sang scopes.
(Bwf.78-81a,89b-90a)

the greatest of hall-buildings; he whose word had wide sway named it Heorot. He did not abandon his pledge, distributed rings, treasure at the feast. . . . there was the strumming of the harp, the song of the singer was clear.

Similarly, the Rood-poet describes the heaven he longs for in the same metaphor of hall-joys:

þær is blis mycel,
dream on heofonum, þær is dryhtnes folc
geseted to symle, þær is singal blis
ond me þonne asette þær ic syppan mot
wunian on wuldre, well mid þam halgum
dreames brucan. (139b-144a)

To where there is great bliss and joy in heaven,
Where the Lord's host is seated at the feast,
And it shall set me where I afterwards
May dwell in glory, live in lasting bliss
Among the saints.

The heroic mode of expression is expanded to include a heaven that is a compound of Christian theology and heroic idealism.

Exile and heroism are still one in the next line of the poem, Si me dryhten freond 'May God be friend to me'(144b). Just as the Wanderer is ever seeking a new lord, so the visionary seeks a way out of his exile and pleads for admittance into the dryht of heaven. The follower of the cross realizes that God's troop is the one of which he wants to be a member, and that the cross provides a means to that end, not the end in itself.

In the last six lines of the poem, Christ as hero again makes his appearance as the victorious commander:

> Se sunu wæs sigorfæst on þam siðfate,
> mihtig ond spedig, þa he mid manigeo com,
> gasta weorode, on godes rice,
> anwealda ælmihtig, englum to blisse
> ond eallum ðam halgum þam þe on heofonum ær
> wunedon on wuldre, þa heora wealdend cwom,
> ælmihtig god, þær his eðel wæs.
> (150-156)

> The Son was mighty on that expedition,
> Successful and victorious; and when
> The one Almighty Ruler brought with Him
> A [host] of spirits to God's kingdom,
> To bliss among the angels and the souls
> Of all who dwelt already in the heavens
> In glory, then Almighty God had come,
> The Ruler [came to the land where his home was].

A subsidiary to the primary heroic deed of conquering death and proffering life to mankind is the Harrowing of Hell. On that journey, too, Christ is victorious and brings those who have suffered exile in hell to their rightful heofonlicne ham 'heavenly home'(148a). Eðel is usually translated "native land," but this rendering is somewhat weak. For the Anglo-Saxon, eðel was an integral part of the heroic ideal, the opposite of exile. It meant that one had a lord and a place where one belonged, where one was at home. Thus the place where Christ belongs is also the place where the members of his dryht belong, in their heavenly home which has been won for them by Christ's heroic deed on the cross.

Thus we see that the Rood-poet uses traditional modes of expression, exilic and heroic imagery in new, expanded ways to express profound spiritual truth. But a dry and

mechanical reduction in linear prose of the image patterns which make up a work like the Dream of the Rood does no justice to its poetry. With the help of other Old English literature, we have, in these last two chapters, extracted the bare bones of imagery in order to learn how the poet has changed his tradition to express new intellectual and spiritual concepts. We have studied two extremes, the stained and the splendent cross, and hinted at the methods the poet uses to effect the transition from one to the other. The next chapter will focus directly on these methods. Through this discussion, I trust, the bare bones of imagery will quicken into some semblance of the living poem of which they are a part.

Chapter IV:

Stains to Splendour: Techniques of Transformation

The transition from stains to splendour in the Dream of the Rood rests solidly on the technical skill with which the poet effects such change, but the metaphorical importance of that transition far surpasses technique. An examination of the poet's technique affords a way of understanding the qualities that transcend technique and that touch upon themes of universal significance. As A.A. Lee says,

> It is one of the peculiar powers of the Dream of the Rood as a poem that it expresses vividly by means of highly concrete metaphors of existence a deep human desire for ultimate fulfillment -- a tree, a man, a mother, and a dreamer become the Tree, the Man, the Mother of God, and the Worshipper -- without in any way reducing the particularity and special nature of each individual image.[1]

The "desire for ultimate fulfillment" is certainly found in the poem, but it goes beyond the submersion of the individual into the representative, as this chapter will show. In a very subtle and lyrical way, the poet advocates a process of redemption, but he couches the process as a movement to identification with Christ. Leiter calls the transition from stains to splendour in the Dream of the Rood "patterns of transformation" and states that the three

characters in the poem, Christ, cross and visionary, are all transformed by the same dramatic process, the journey from defeat to victory:

> He [the poet] constructed the three identical dramas that form the poem: the defeat and paradoxical victory of Christ, the hewing down and raising up of the Cross, and the sleep and awakening of the stained and sinful Dreamer.[2]

Isaacs, in his book, Structural-Principles in Old English Poetry, devotes his first chapter to elucidating the structural principle which, in his opinion, informs the Dream of the Rood and which he calls "progressive identifications."[3] Both writers are helpful, and this chapter of the thesis draws heavily on them but presents the same material they consider with a slightly different interpretation and in considerably more depth.

The verbs of perception and communication, both listening and speaking, the imagery of exaltation and debasement and, finally, the passages surrounding the verbs of transition found throughout the poem are central to a consideration of the kind of transformation that the poem is ultimately about. Such a study will allow for a discussion of the way in which the visionary, through identifying with the cross and with Christ, effects the transformation from "stained and sinful Dreamer" to forgiven, blithe believer. Because these topics are so closely related, the passages which illustrate them must often be repeated; such

repetition illustrates with what economy the poem is constructed.

Because the verbs of perception have been treated briefly in the first chapter, a quick recapitulation will lead into this discussion. In a general overview of the poem, both visionary and cross go through the same sequence of seeing, perceiving, hearing and, finally, speaking. In the opening lines of the poem, the sinful visionary sees the glorious cross. Only after repetition of the verb geseah, indicating that the sight is not merely a glance, does the visionary begin to ongytan 'perceive'(18b) that there is more to the cross than gold and gems.[4] This added perception results from the visionary's awareness of his sinful state. Driven by fear and sorrow, the visionary has begun his process of transformation by the fourteenth line, where he confesses that he is stained with iniquities. Valuable as his perception is, sight is not enough for true understanding.

The verbs of communication lead the visionary to a more complete understanding of the cross. The poem opens with the exclamation,

> Hwæt! Ic swefna cyst secgan wylle,
> hwæt me gemætte to midre nihte,
> syðpan reordberend reste wunedon!
> (1-3, my emphasis)

> Hear while I tell about the best of dreams
> Which came to me the middle of one night
> While [speech-bearers] were sleeping in their beds.

This passage is important when taken in conjunction with the

poet's experience during and after the vision. Thus the poet hears the cross begin to speak and it tells the visionary all of its experiences, starting with sight and moving to speaking. It exhorts him to repentance and then commands him to tell his vision to other bearers of speech. As Isaacs points out, the poet makes "an equation between faith and the ability to speak."[5] This equation is forcefully emphasized in the cross's discussion of Doomsday:

> Ne mæg pær ænig unforht wesan
> for pam worde • pe se wealdend cwyð.
> Frineð he for pære mænige hwær se man sie,
> se ðe for dryhtnes naman deaðes wolde
> biteres onbyrigan, swa he ær on ðam beame
> dyde.
> Ac hie ponne forhtiað, ond fea pencap
> hwæt hie to Criste cweðan onginnen.
> (110-116)

> Nor then may any man be without fear
> About the words the Lord shall say to him.
> Before all He shall ask where that man is,
> Who for God's name would suffer bitter death
> As formerly He did upon the cross.
> Then will they be afraid, and few will know
> What they may say to Christ.

The cross indicates its own status by the ability to communicate in language. It is also a sign of the poet's faith that he is able to speak. He prays to the cross after it has finished speaking and then, bringing the poem full circle in the minds of the audience if not actually, tells all of his experiences in the same way as the cross does. Through the verbs of perception and communication, the transition from stained, silent, yet seeing visionary to comprehending, believing and hopeful speaker mirrors the transition from

stained to splendent cross.

The transition from stains to splendour is also reflected in the change from debasement to exaltation which pervades the poem. The "up-and-down movement" that Isaacs perceives as being a secondary structural principle in the Dream of the Rood constitutes part of this change from debasement to exaltation.[6] Another element in the shift from debasement to exaltation is a back-and-forth movement that takes in past, present and future and complements the up-and-down movement. Some of this imagery is straightforward but some of it accentuates the essential paradox that has already been discussed in the last chapter: the heroic task that demands the sacrifice of life to regain life. The first image in this pattern is found in the sight of the cross lifted high in the sky, part of the initial glorious vision of the jewelled cross. Leiter acknowledges the translation of lædan as "towering," but goes on to argue that lædan should also be read as "leading" or "guiding"[7] because the cross does, in fact, lead to the sky. The vision of the cross as stretching from earth to heaven, bridging the gulf between, symbolizes the cross's actual function in guiding the visionary from sin to hope by the end of the poem. The visionary is lying down (24) as he contemplates the jewelled cross. This prostration, accompanied by a reiteration of his sorrowful mood and recalling the already established association between sorrow and sin, again

reinforces the visionary's sinful condition. The contrast between the towering cross and the cowering sinner is absolute by the time when the cross begins to speak. As a result of this speech, the poet can make the transition from sin to hope.

In the cross's story, the images of rising and falling recur regularly, and the first few lines look back to what has gone before and forward to what will come:

> "Pæt wæs geara iu, (ic pæt gyta geman),
> þæt ic was aheawen holtes on ende,
> astyred of stefne minum. Genaman me þær
> strange feondas,
> geworhton him pær to wæfersyne, heton me
> heora wergas hebban.
> Bæron me þær beornas on eaxlum, oðþæt þie
> me on beorg asetton,
> gefæstnodon me pær feondas genoge."
> (28-33a)

> 'It was long past -- I still remember it --
> That I was cut down at the copse's end,
> Moved from my roots. Strong enemies there took me,
> Told me to hold aloft their criminals,
> Made me a spectacle. Men carried me
> Upon their shoulders, set me on a hill,
> A host of enemies there fastened me.

This is the cross's autobiography: it is hewn down and raised again, but its new raising, set high on a hill, differs markedly from the towering cross of the initial vision and also, for that matter, from its status as a tree in the forest. The next lines refer to Christ, and in them the paradox of being debased to be exalted is most pronounced:

> Geseah ic pa frean mancynnes
> efstan elne mycle pæt he me wolde on gestigan.
> Pær ic pa ne dorste ofer dryhtnes word
> bugan oðþe berstan, pa ic bifian geseah

eorðan sceatas. Ealle ic mihte
feondas gefyllan, hwæðre ic fæste stod.
Ongyrede hine þa geong hæleð, (þæt wæs
god ælmihtig),
strang ondstiðmod. Gestah he on gealgan
heanne.
(33-40a)

And then I saw the Lord of all mankind
Hasten with [great courage] that he might mount
Upon me. I durst not against God's word
Bend down or break, when I saw tremble all
The surface of the earth! Although I might
Have struck down all the foes, yet stood I fast.
Then the young hero (who was God Almighty)
[stripped himself], resolute and strong in heart.
He climbed onto the lofty gallows-tree.

The cross is raised and Christ hastens to ascend it. The cross, realizing its awful task, itself wishes to fall to earth; failing that, its next desire is to fell Christ's enemies. Finally, Christ does ascend the high gallows, and in the high gallows exaltation and debasement are fused. For the Anglo-Saxon audience the gallows was a place of degradation. Whitelock says that in Anglo-Saxon law no reparation could be demanded for an executed criminal.[8] Presumably this was because he died in degradation and dishonour. But in view of the heroic diction the poet uses in explaining Christ's willing sacrifice, the audience would also feel that the action of Christ in ascending the cross is, at the same time, lofty and noble. Thus, the gealgan hean are "the height of Christ's achievement, while marking the depths of his debasement,"[9] an apparently irreconcilable paradox. This great degradation also reflects Christ's initial descent from heaven to the world of men. There is no specific mention of

the Incarnation in the poem, but the allusion to Mary, the Mother of God, brings to mind that great initial condescension to man.[10]

The next instance of height imagery identifies the cross with Christ very closely: Rod wæs ic aræred. Ahof ic ricne cyning, 'A rood I was raised up; and I held high/ The noble King,'(44). Both the cross and Christ are raised, but in the same way as Christ's ascension of the cross is, in one way, his degradation, so the cross's raising emphasizes its debased purpose. The paradox is strengthened by the poet's reference in line 56 to the cyninges fyll 'King's [fall].' The fall of the King is actually his victory, the signal that his heroic task is completed. The identification of the cross with the King tightens when the cross suffers the same fate as its Lord:

Þa us man fyllan ongan
ealle to eorðan. Þæt wæs egeslic wyrd!
Bedealf us man on deopan scæpe.
(73b-75a)

Then men began
To cut us down. That was a dreadful fate.
In a deep pit they buried us.

From this point, the nadir of depression and degradation, the up-and-down imagery is positive. The cross is resurrected and adorned with gold and silver (77) and towers under heaven (85a). In a recapitulation of Christ's work, the poet states that Christ buried death and then rose again:

Þæt hit is wuldres beam,
se ðe ælmihtig god on prowode

for mancynnes manegum synnum
ond Adomes ealdgewyrhtum.
Deað he pær byrigde hwæðere eft dryhten aras
mid his miclan mihte mannum to helpe.
He ða on heofenas astag. (97b-103a)

. . . this is the tree of glory
On which Almighty God once suffered torments
For mankind's many sins, and for the deeds
Of Adam long ago. He [buried/tasted] death
Thereon; and yet the Lord arose again
By his great might to come to human aid.
He rose to heaven.

The poet's choice of verbs shows his awareness of what P.B. Taylor calls "purposeful ambiguity."[11] According to F.H. Whitman, byrigde possesses a double meaning: either birgan 'to taste' or byrgan 'to bury.'[12] Both of these interpretations provide nuances that the poet exploits. The reference to tasting recalls Adomes ealdgeweorc which can only be reversed by the second Adam's tasting of death.[13] Legend has it that Adam's skull was buried under Golgotha,[14] and the spilling of Christ's blood cleansed Adam's original misdeed. By his burial, Christ conquers and buries death for all time. Altogether, byrigde resonates with associations that evoke the fall of mankind, the redemption of the world on Golgotha and Christ's resurrection mannum to helpe.

After this, the poet, without using specific up-and-down language, relates three journeys which emphasize the rising and falling imagery explicit in the poem and which look backward to the crucifixion and forward to Doomsday. Christ will descend once more to earth on the Day of Judgement to seek his followers and take them up to heaven with

him(103b-121). The visionary prays that the cross, which he has formerly seen on this earth, will come to fetch him to heaven where there is perpetual joy(135-144a). In the last six lines of the poem, the poet talks about the Harrowing of Hell, which looks back to the time of the crucifixion and foreshadows Doomsday. The journey down to hell is for the express purpose of going back up to heaven. Thus we can see that, through the use of up-and-down and back-and-forth movement, the poet, again in microcosm, displays the transformation from "down" to "up." The visionary must now make the choice of accepting the gift of transformation and becoming part of the upward movement in the poem or rejecting the possibility and becoming like the feondas(30b, 33a) who represent the degradation to which rejection leads.

A discussion of the passages specifically referring to transformation again reveals the poem's change from negative to positive. Through the tale of Christ's suffering and glorification, and the relation of its own transformation, the cross offers the visionary a model for his use. Leiter contends that lædan(5a) must be read literally as well as connotatively. An examination of the context of lædan again reveals "purposeful ambiguity."[1]

> Puhte me pæt ic gesawe syllicre treow
> on lyft lædan, leohte bewunden,
> beama beorhtost. (4-6a)
>
> It was as though I saw a wondrous tree
> Towering in the sky suffused with light,
> Brightest of beams.

Taylor argues that *treow* should also be read as 'truth'[15] and that the literal tree and the metaphorical truth expand the meaning of the line. If this idea is combined with Leiter's contention that *lædan* means "guiding," then the result is a multi-levelled series of half-lines that show on the one hand the literal cross which bore the Saviour stretching over the earth and on the other, truth as guiding the seeker from earth to heaven. *Treow* has heroic associations with loyalty and obedience[16] and these associations provide an additional layer of meaning. That the tree is both tree and truth, and that it is loyal and obedient, gives the Anglo-Saxon poet a symbol of subtle complexity and considerable power. The tree becomes the cross, the loyal and obedient retainer who obeys its Lord by guiding seekers after truth to the ultimate Truth. This multiplicity of interpretations is emphasized again by the ambiguity inherent in *beama beorhtost*. The tree is literally a beam of wood, but it is also the beam of the light of truth which penetrates and exposes the dark exile of the sinner's spiritual night. Already in the first lines of the poem, then, the sense of dynamic movement, of transition, is unequivocally present.

Taylor argues in the same way for *wealdes treow*(17b). This line is usually emended to read *wealdendes treow* 'Ruler's tree'. Taylor sensibly favours retaining the manuscript reading since it conveys the meaning of the emendation plus an association which the emendation lacks. *Wealdes*,

Taylor contends, evokes the image of God as Ruler in truth, as well as all the normal associations of "woods" and "forests" that are its literal meaning. By using wealdes the poet projects the image of "a piece of nature and a sign of grace."[17] This is a brilliant stroke, for it portrays the ultimate end of transformation, which is complete identification. The "piece of nature" is in union with the "sign of grace." For the audience which has been induced to identify completely with the visionary, this must seem a sign of grace indeed.

The next instance of transformation is the central image that controls all the other instances of the same process:

> Geseah ic þæt fuse beacen
> wendan wædum ond bleom; hwilum hit wæs mid wætan bestemed,
> beswyled mid swates gange, hwilum mid since gegyrwed.
> (21b-23)
>
> I saw that lively beacon
> Changing its clothes and hues; sometimes it was
> Bedewed with blood and drenched with flowing gore,
> At other times it was bedecked with treasure.

Beacen displays the same kind of ambiguity as beama beorhtost. It is a sign but also a beacon in that it lights the direction that the sign indicates. Here the gulf between the stained and splendent cross is bridged; one can change to the other. The visionary sees the cross and perceives the alteration, but he does not yet understand the way of transformation. Leading him to understanding is the function of

the rest of the poem.

In the cross's story, the passages of transformation amplify the up-and-down movement discussed earlier. In its lament at being hewn down in the forest, the cross bemoans its transformation from a tree to a spectacle fashioned for foul deeds. But this negative transformation is an essential part of the scheme of salvation that is the point of all the transformations in the poem. The cross is now like the visionary, caught in the depths of sin. It is transformed to function evilly and needs the "loosing"(41b) which the Saviour proposes to accomplish before its final transformation can take place:

> Gestah he on gealgan heanne,
> modig on manigra gesyhðe, - þa he wolde mancyn
> lysan.
> (40b - 41)
>
> He climbed onto the lofty gallows-tree,
> Bold in the sight of many watching men,
> When He intended to redeem mankind.

This redemptive act of the Lord is the avenue of transformation for the stained sinner and the cross which has by now been characterized as human. The cross's actual experiences have only the two references to transformation, but these are most important. The redemptive act is in process, and until the geong hæleð 'young hero'(39a) completes it, the only transformation possible is the one that the cross suffers at the hands of its enemies. But once Christ dies, and in dying conquers death, the opposite kind of transition

becomes possible. This happens to the cross at the hands of the friends of the Lord. Both feondas(30b,33a) and freondas (76a) raise the cross, but to what different ends!

Hwæðre me pær dryhtnes pegnas,
freondas gefrunon,
ond gyredon me golde ond seolfre.
(75b-77)

But friends
And servants of the Lord learnt where I was,
And [adorned] me with gold and silver.

The verb gyredon is important in that the preterite indicative form here used suggests a process of adorning, whereas the participles, gegyred(16a) and gegyrwed(23b), found in the initial vision suggest the finished work. The cross is resurrected from its deep pit of symbolic exile and given the rewards that its loyalty and obedience deserve. The difference in the forms of gyran shows the change in the poet's understanding. Seeing the adorned cross he fears, but hearing the cross's story he learns that the adorning is a process of which he also can become a part. The adorning of the cross recalls the visionary's initial sight of the cross and also builds a close identification with Christ who is resurrected and glorified.

Because the cross has participated in Christ's suffering and then been glorified by the thanes of the Lord, it now has the ability to act as a guide to transformation for the visionary and, by extension, for all of mankind:

Iu ic wæs geworden wita heardost,
leodum laðost, ærpan ic him lifes weg

rihtne gerymde, reordberendum.
(87-89)

Once I became the cruellest of tortures,
Most hateful to all nations, till the time
I opened the right way of life for men.

The cross harks back to its initial degradation and then, without referring directly to its subsequent exaltation, implies the adorning in saying that it is now the way through which transformation from stains to splendour can take place. The reference to the world of speaking men is part of the pattern that emphasizes the importance of speech in a life transformed by following the example set by the cross. If such a transformation does in fact take place, then speaking of it constitutes evidence of that change. Transformation comes to the cross and it speaks; renewal visits the visionary and he speaks and therefore redemption is possible for any individual, who will then pass on the message. The ability to speak comments on the authenticity of the whole experience. The visionary relies on the authority of his divinely inspired swefna cyst 'best of [visions]'(1a). His divinely inspired vision derives credibility and historicity from the eye-witness account of the crucifixion. Because of its first-hand experience of transformation, the cross affirms faith in Christ, which in turn proclaims the veracity of the poet's vision.

This identification of the cross with mankind other than the visionary is strengthened by the cross's comparing

itself with Mary in a passage that illustrates again P.B. Taylor's "purposeful ambiguity:"

> Hwæt, me þa geweorðode wuldres ealdor
> ofer holmwudu, heofonrices weard!
> Swylce swa he his modor eac, Marian sylfe,
> ælmihtig god for ealle menn
> geweorðode ofer eall wifa cynn.
> (90-94)

> So then the Prince of glory honoured me,
> And heaven's King exalted me above
> All other trees, just as Almighty God
> Raised up His mother Mary for all men
> Above all other women in the world.

Again, the preterite indicative geweorðode suggests a process of transformation from a "piece of nature" to a "sign of grace." The manuscript reading of holmwudu bears this out with its double connotation. In its usual emendation to holtwudu, it retains the literal meaning of "tree of the wood" but loses the connotation that both Leiter and Taylor[18] see as illustrative of the transformation process. Holmwudu retains the idea of the tree in -wudu and adds the element of the sea in holm; thus the usual translation of holmwudu as "ship" provides an additional layer of meaning whereby the tree of the forest becomes a means of passage from one state to another. The mention of Mary and the rest of humanity illustrates the universality of the invitation to transformation that the cross extends.

But the cross's adorning is double-edged and does not come easily. The cross has been changed by the Lord of glory from a sin-stained cross to a jewelled one; the stains of

fallen creation are covered, blotted out, as it were, by the stains of Christ's blood. But the stains of Christ's blood are also adornment, as can be seen by the description of their brilliance in the first vision. The blood-stained cross is as bright as the jewelled one. The transformation of stains to splendour can take place only by the means of stains, and it is only through the adornment of Christ's blood that the cross can be adorned with jewels. This same process can transform the sinful visionary.

After this elucidation of the process of redemption, the cross exhorts the visionary to pass on the message to other men and continues speaking, reviewing the events of salvation history very briefly. In its allusion to Doomsday, the cross indicates that Christ will return again to seek mankind and in his choice of words recalls that God initiates the process of ultimate redemption which man must either accept or reject. The poet's acceptance is emphasized by the desire to seek the cross(127). In line 135 and following, the poet states that he longs for the day when the cross will fetch him to heaven. He has lost his fear and ardently desires an external translation to glory which will be effected by means of the cross. This external translation, however, merely affirms the fact that an inner transformation has taken place through the agency of the cross, which has now become the visionary's protector(130b).

In the last passage of the poem, the poet expands his personal transforming experience to include the rest of mankind in the same way that the cross does:

> He us onlysde ond us lif forgeaf,
> heofonlicne ham. Hiht wæs geniwad
> mid bledum ond mid blisse þam þe pær
> bryne þolodan.
> Se sunu wæs sigorfæst on þam siðfate,
> mihtig ond spedig, þa he mid manigeo com,
> gasta weorode, . . . þær his eðel wæs.
> (147-152a, 156b)

> Us he [loosed]
> And granted us our life and heavenly home.
> Hope was renewed with glory and with bliss
> For those who suffered burning fires in hell.
> The Son was mighty on that expedition,
> Successul and victorious; and when
> The one Almighty Ruler brought with Him
> A multitude of spirits to God's kingdom,
> . . . . . .
> The Ruler [came to the land where his home was].

The cross as a means of transformation gives way to Christ as the final and ultimate means of transition. In a way reminiscent of St. Paul's use of the analogy of the Law as a schoolmaster which leads man to Christ, the poet uses the cross as a guide to Christ who is the ultimate "Freer." The gift of life which Christ proffers to his followers is the ultimate heroic gift because it offers release from the constraint of exile and a way to arrive at the best of all places, the heavenly home or <u>eðel</u> which is the desire of every follower of Christ. The Harrowing of Hell is important in this context because it recalls all of the downward transformations that have gone before. Christ's accomplishment of the Harrowing provides a renewal of hope,

because the point of the Harrowing is the final ascent to heaven. Such an ascent is impossible unless there has first been Christ's great emptying of himself.

If one examines the instances of transformation in the Dream of the Rood, one finds that they work in a step-wise fashion: Redemptive history is not one smooth and regular ascent from degradation to exaltation, but rather an uneven pattern of great upsurge followed by a regression before the next sign of progress. It is true that the final image of the poem shows great exaltation and that the over-all effect is victorious, but careful examination shows that the depths from which the visionary starts make the heights which he attains meaningful.

The final purpose of the poet's lyricism is not merely transformation, however, but total identification of all the three characters in the poem in order that the audience will understand that union with Christ is possible. R.R. Edwards contends that this is folly:

> The central concern of the Dream of the Rood is its own narrative art. . . .in particular . . . narrative distance. . . .Because the various types of narrative perspective-- or "distance"-- all proceed from human perception, the poem asserts that divinity is remote from this world, especially for the reordberend who sleep, and that even for those elect who are conscious, the divine is a reflection perceived only from a distance through their own senses.[19]

Isaacs uses the same information regarding narrative technique that Edwards does, analyzes it in the same way, but

comes to the opposite conclusion:

> In the Dream of the Rood, the poet carefully separates the dreamer-speaker from the dreamed-speaker. . . . This separation leads inevitably to total integration: when the cross is identified with Christ, the dreamer and the audience-- having been brought into identity with each other and then with the cross -- are also brought to a (mystical) oneness with Christ.[20]

An examination of the levels of narration shows how completely the poet effects his identifications on even so technical a level. On the first level, the poet induces his audience to identify with him by making himself an observer like they are. When the cross begins to speak, it portrays itself as an observer as well. The levels of observation, baldly stated, are: audience as observer of the poet; poet as speaker moving almost immediately to poet as observer of the cross; cross as speaker characterizing itself as observer of Christ. This inward movement to Christ parallels an outward movement which portrays the redemptive process made possible by Christ. The cross moves from being an observer of Christ to a complete identification with him, after which it exhorts the visionary to repentance. By the time it has finished speaking the poet has also been identified with Christ, and the visionary then becomes the speaker who brings the poem to an end by submerging his persona into his audience.

On a less technical level, Isaacs argues that the

visionary is identified with the cross; the cross is identified with Christ and therefore the visionary is identified with Christ.[21] While this is logical, it seems to me that he could have supported his case more strongly if he had examined the image patterns which associate all of the characters. Taking the cross as the first focus, let us examine its associations with Christ; having established these, we can look at the visionary for whose benefit the associations are established and see how he relates first to the cross and then to Christ.

The cross is most clearly identified with Christ by taking the physical suffering of Christ on itself. Woolf argues that this shows the poet's careful treading of the fine line between the Nestorians and the Monophysites in the christological disputes which raged during the early Anglo-Saxon period. She contends that by attributing the human side of Christ's nature, with its concomitant suffering during the crucifixion, to the cross, the poet can show Christ as fully victorious without denying any part of his dual nature.[22] While this may be so, no knowledge of the christological debate is necessary to appreciate the poet's characterization of the cross. The cross undergoes the same experience as Christ does, not as surrogate, but as participant:

> Purhdrifan hi me wid deorcan næglum. On me
> syndon þa dolg gesiene,
> opene inwidhlemmas. Ne dorste ic hira

nænigum sceððan.
Bysmeredon hie unc butu ætgædere. Eall ic
wæs mid blode bestemed,
begoten of pæs guman sidan. (46-49a)

They pierced me with dark nails;
The scars can still be clearly seen on me,
The open wounds of malice. Yet might I
Not harm them. They reviled us both together.
I was made wet all over with the blood
Which poured out from His side.

Later the cross is felled and buried in a deep pit. To be sure, the more graphic descriptions of suffering refer to the cross's agony, but there are numerous references to Christ's suffering and death which show that the poet's interest does not lie in minimizing Christ's death. The blood pouring from his side, the cyninges fyll 'King's [fall]' (56a), limwerig 'limb-weary' (63a), the reference to Christ's burial and the cooling of the body (65b, 72b), the two direct references to his death (101a, 113-114) and the reiteration of Christ's suffering (84a, 98b, 145b) all show that the poet is fully aware of Christ's suffering and makes no attempt to hide it. His primary purpose lies in showing Christ's victory and how that victory benefits mankind. He characterizes that conquest as a lofty and noble deed by using heroic language, but he never closes his eyes to the means whereby that victory was won, christological disputes notwithstanding. The cross suffers with Christ, not instead of him. It seems to me just as probable that the poet was taking literally Christ's words:

If any man will come after me, let him
take up his cross and follow me.
Matthew 16:24

The cross, characterized as a follower of Christ, must submit to its lot, and in doing so it provides an example for the visionary. By accepting its "cross," the cross-retainer follows Christ's injunction,

> For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.
> Matthew 16:25

The cross, then, by laying down its own personal desires, follows Christ in the right way which it then shows to mankind. Because of its submission the cross is rewarded by being raised with Christ and honoured by him. In summary, the cross is principally identified with Christ in that the Rood-poet characterizes both of them as losing their physical lives in order to gain spiritual life.

The associations between the visionary and the cross and between the visionary and Christ are considerably more complex. As seen in the second chapter, both visionary and cross are characterized as exiles driven by sorrows, in formulae that echo each other in numerous places. The visionary's association with the cross is found only in his likeness to the condition portrayed by the stained cross. His association with Christ is promoted by means of the jewelled cross, but there are no verbal echoes that bind the visionary to the splendent cross as there are literary ties that associate the visionary with Christ. In effect, the visionary and the cross are associated in exile, but not in

resurrection. The visionary is not going to be like the glorified cross; he is going to be like Christ. Twice the cross calls the visionary hæleð min se leofa '[my beloved hero]'(78b, 95b), a reference that is used only of Christ elsewhere in the poem(39a).

One last association between the visionary and Christ is revealed in the pattern of tasting and feasting that occurs near the end of the poem. Three passages show the relationship of tasting to ultimate feasting:

> se ðe ælmihtig god on prowode
> for mancynnes manegum synnum
> ond Adomes ealdgewyrhtum.
> Deað he þær byrigde, hwæðere eft dryhten aras
> mid his miclan mihte mannum to helpe.
> (98-102)

> . . . this is the tree of glory
> On which Almighty God once suffered torments
> For mankind's many sins, and for the deeds
> Of Adam long ago. He tasted death
> Thereon; and yet the Lord arose again
> By His great might to come to human aid.

Adam's eating the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil results in spiritual death for mankind, and ultimately, in Christ's tasting death; Christ's tasting of death reverses that sentence of spiritual exile.

> Frineð he for þære mænige hwær se man sie,
> se ðe for dryhtnes naman deaðes wolde
> biteres onbyrigan, swa he ær on ðam beame
> dyde. (112-114)

> Before all He shall ask where that man is
> Who for God's name would [taste] bitter death
> As formerly He did upon the cross.

Each individual who wishes to partake of the transformation

which Christ's death makes possible must undergo Christ's experience himself.

ond ic wene me
daga gehwylce hwænne me dryhtnes rod,
. . .
on pysson lænan life gefetige
ond me ponne gebringe . . .
. . . pær is dryhtnes folc
geseted to symle. (135b-136,138-139a,140b-141a)

. . . and I wait each day
For when the cross of God, . . .
may fetch me from
This transitory life and carry me
. . .
Where the Lord's host is [set] at the feast.

The visionary undergoes the experience of self-abnegation elucidated in the first two quotations and hopes for a place at the feast laid for followers of the Lord in heaven, where he will taste perfect bliss.

Because of the visionary's identification with Christ, he gains the ability to speak. Through the agency of the cross, the poet receives the command to speak and his telling of the vision fulfills that command. More important, however, is the fact that this ability to speak takes the visionary out of the ranks of the tongue-tied who can find no answer to Christ's question on Doomsday. Having gone through the same experience of self-abnegation as Christ and the cross, the visionary can confidently reply to Christ's query.

The final fusion of all the strands of imagery considered in the last three chapters occurs in the last

lines of the poem:

> Se sunu wæs sigorfæst on þam siðfate,
> mihtig ond spedig, þa he mid manigeo com,
> gasta weorode, on godes rice,
> anwealda ælmihtig, englum to blisse
> ond eallum ðam halgum þam þe on heofonum ær
> wunedon on wuldre, þa heora wealdend cwom,
> ælmihtig god, þær his eðel wæs.
> (150-156)

> The Son was mighty on that expedition,
> Successful and victorious; and when
> The one Almighty Ruler brought with Him
> A multitude of spirits to God's kingdom,
> To bliss among the angels and the souls
> Of all who dwelt already in the heavens
> In glory, then Almighty God had come,
> The Ruler [came to the land where his home was].

The poet ties the strands with which he has worked throughout the poem into a knot that unifies all that has gone before. The light imagery so prevalent in the initial vision of the splendent cross ends in glory in the heaven which is Christ's native place; the heroic mode of expression ends in Christ the victorious captain of the faith reclaiming a host of souls from hell and taking them to the eðel which is the desire of every hero; the imagery of ascension ends with Christ's journey from hell up to heaven. The final identification of the visionary and the cross with Christ comes in the journey of Christ to his eðel. The fact that he must come to his native land indicates that he, like the cross, the visionary and the host of souls in hell, has been an exile. But while in exile from his native land, Christ conquers death and replaces exile with eðel for all of mankind. Therefore the exaltation of the cross and the hope

of the visionary have a logical reason and a certain fulfillment.

Chapter V: Unity in the Dream of the Rood

In recent years a critical debate about the unity of the Dream of the Rood has elicited much controversy. Many critics feel that the poem ends at line 77 and that lines 78 to 156 are a later addition. In their influential edition of 1934, Dickins and Ross state categorically,

> Then too the Vercelli Text is probably composite. The last few lines, referring to the Harrowing of Hell, have all the appearance of an addition, and stylistically the poem seems to divide at l. 78. The latter half . . . seems to us definitely inferior.[1]

Neither editor has changed his mind in the successive reprintings of their critical edition, and their view has been influential. Kemp Malone agrees,[2] and as recently as 1970 Michael Alexander sees fit to translate only the first seventy-seven lines, "concurring in the opinion of Dickins and Ross that the text is not only expanded but composite, and that the latter half, from a different hand, is definitely inferior."[3] J.A. Burrow attempts to soften the position:

> It [the second half] is, as I have admitted, inferior; but despite some laxness of rhythm and diffuseness of expression, it is not difficult to see that the themes of the earlier part are developed consistently and meaningfully.[4]

I disagree with these views, as the previous chapters suggest,

for in my view the Dream of the Rood constitutes the work of a single poet. Verbal echoes in the poem provide arguments for its unity. Elements of all the verbal complexes to be discussed are found in the first part of the poem as well as in the supposedly inferior latter part.

The most obvious verbal echo is the exact repetition of menn ofer moldan, ond eall peos mære gesceaft which occurs first in line 12 and again in line 82. Menn ofer moldan is a stock phrase used, for example, in Christ I, when the poet wishes to refer to the whole world of men. In a passage describing the Immaculate Conception, the Anglo-Saxon poet says, ne purh sæd ne cwom sigores agend/ monnes ofer moldan 'the master of victory did not come through seed to the men over the earth'(Chr.420-421a). Using menn ofer moldan as a beginning, the Rood-poet expands the given to include the non-human created order. This provides the formula allowing him to place the retainer-cross in an environment which resembles as closely as possible the environment of the visionary, the world of men, of reordberend. The cross plays a somewhat ambivalent role in the poem. Clearly it represents fallen creation, but through its personification, it touches on the world of humanity. The poet's equation of the world of men and the rest of creation allows the cross to move easily between the two. By insisting, in line 12, that the whole world of men and all of creation are redeemed with the holy angels and engage in

contemplating the cross, the poet makes the redemption and exaltation of the tree of the forest plausible to the Anglo-Saxon audience. The repetition of the whole line in the second half of the poem reinforces the idea of all men and all creation honouring the representative of creation for its participation in the redemption of mankind. The line proves a very effective unifying device, because throughout the poem the cross guides the visionary. Nature, fallen through Adam's disobedience, provides the cross whereby mankind may be redeemed.

As already mentioned, reordberend is the visionary's context, as mære gesceaft is the cross's. Reordberend is the touchstone of the complex of references to hearing and speaking which serve to unify the poem further. Since much has already been said about this pattern, a list with line numbers and a short discussion will suffice to indicate the importance of the hearing and speaking pattern to the poem's unity: secgan(1b); reordberend(3a); gehyrde and hleoðrode(26); secge(96b); onwreoh wordum(97a); cwyð(111b); frineð(112a); cweðan(116b) and gebæd(122a). Of these words, two have especially significant functions. Hleoðrian is used once in the Finnsburg fragment where Hnæf calls his men to battle and exhorts them to brave deeds: Hnæf hleoprode ða heapogeong cyning 'Hnæf cried out then, the king untried at war'(Finn.2). The Anglo-Saxon poet uses the same word to describe St. Andrew's exhortation of his followers: Swa hleoðrode halig

cempa 'So exhorted the holy warrior'(And.461). Hleoðrian seems to carry with it connotations of exhortation, making the Rood-poet's use of it in the cross's exhortation entirely appropriate. The cross calls the visionary to the same kind of spiritual battle that it describes in its speech.

Gebiddan is usually translated as "request" or "entreat." It is in this sense that Wealhðeo appeals to Beowulf:

> "Beo þu suna minum
> dædum gedefe, dreamhealdende.
> . . . doð swa ic bidde."
> (Bwf.1226b-1227, 1231b)

'Be gentle in deeds to my son, you who are holding happiness. . . . Do as I pray.'

The man who steals the cup from the dragon-hoard similarly entreats his lord:

> mandryhtne bær
> fæted wæge, friodwære bæd
> hlaford sinne. (Bwf. 2281b-2283a)

[he] bore the gilded cup to his leader, prayed a compact of peace of his lord.

These two examples show the appropriateness of the Rood-poet's use of gebæd: Gebæd ic me þa to þan beame bliðe mode, 'I prayed then to cross with joyous heart'(122). The poet exploits the nuances of entreating the lord of the troop as well as those of praying to the God of heaven. In view of the visionary's membership in the troop of the cross, he makes fitting use of gebiddan.

Through the use of the verbal complex of hearing and

speaking, too, the poet takes care to unify the time sequence in his poem. Of the verbs, three, secgan, secge, onwreoh, are in the present tense; three, cwyð, frineð and cweðan, refer to future time and three, gehyrde, hleoðrode and gebæd, to past time. The poet begins in the present and switches to the past as he recalls his vision; the cross speaks in the present in commanding the visionary to speak and in the future tense when describing Doomsday. In the last reference, gebæd, the poet returns to the past tense to describe the effect of his vision. Thus, through using identical diction in both halves of his poem, the poet unifies past, present and future. There is one more unifying element, however, that in my opinion is a master stroke. Well into the second half of the poem, the cross commands the poet to speak:

> Nu ic þe hate, hæleð min se leofa,
> þæt ðu þas gesyhðe secge mannum,
> onwreoh wordum . . . .
> (95-97a, my emphasis)

> Now, [my beloved hero], I order you
> That you reveal this vision to mankind,
> Declare in words . . . .

The poet brilliantly fulfills this command in the first line of the poem: Hwæt! Ic swefna cyst secgan wylle 'Hear while I tell about the best of [visions](1). Using the same verb in both instances, the poet brings the poem full circle, from a command to proclaim to the proclamation itself.

Another important recurring pattern employs words to do with sinfulness. Its elements are synnum,(13b), wæfersyne(31a),

synnum(99b), Adomes ealdgewyrhtum(100), and finally synnum (146b) again. Sin causes all of the conflict in the poem. The poet makes a purposeful progression in his uses of synn and the related elements of the complex. In line 14, the sin is solely the visionary's. By the next example of the pattern, wæfersyne 'spectacle'(31a), the taint of sin has spread to the feondas 'enemies'(30b-33a), the enemies of the Lord. All mankind suffers sin's afflictions by the second use of synnum (99b), and the reference to Adomes ealdgeweorc 'deeds/ Of Adam long ago'(100) supplies the reason for mankind's lapsed state. The last reference to sin also refers to all of mankind, but, like the former reference, is surrounded by the remedy for the stains of sin. In the first instance, the cross states,

> pæt hit is wuldres beam,
> se ðe ælmihtig god on prowode
> for mancynnes manegum synnum
> (97b-99)

> . . . . this is the tree of glory
> On which Almighty God once suffered torments
> For mankind's many sins.

The visionary uses almost identical diction in the last reference to humanity's sins:

> se ðe her on eorpan ær prowode
> on pam gealgtreowe for guman synnum.
> (145-146

> He who once suffered on the gallows tree
> On earth here for men's sins.

The remedy for the blots caused by sin demands elne mycle '[great courage]'(34a,60a,123a), and these verbal

echoes refer respectively to Christ, cross and visionary. Thus they not only unify the poem through the repetition of key concepts but also serve to identify the three characters of the poem with each other. Ellen has heroic overtones. Beowulf, for instance, is described in almost the same terms as Christ: Æfter þæm wordum Wedergeata leod/efste mid elne, 'After those words the leader of the Weder-Geats hastened with courage'(Bwf.1492-1493a). The Rood-poet describes Christ as efstan elne mycle '[hastening with great courage]'(34a). Thus the poet invests his spiritual conflict with all the concreteness of heroic combat, gaining all the positive connotations of a hero in battle.

The nuances of elne mycle as used in the reference to the cross are slightly different from those of the previous reference. In the case of the cross, ellen can be compared to Wiglaf's action in aiding Beowulf in his fight with the dragon:

> Born bord wið rond, byrne ne meahte
> geongum garwigan geoce gefremman,
> ac se maga geonga under his mæges scyld
> elne geeode, þa his agen wæs
> gledum forgrunden. (Bwf.2673-2677a)

> The shield burned up to the rim, the byrnie could not give help to the young spear-warrior, but the young man fought zealously under his kinsman's shield, when his own was crushed by flames.

Just as Wiglaf's duty is to aid his lord zealously, so the cross aids Christ's work: hnag ic hwæðere þam secgum to handa,/ eaðmod elne mycle 'Yet willingly I bent to those men's hands,/

Humbly'(59b-60a). In the same spirit, since he has taken on the task of proclaiming the cross's message, the poet prays to the cross elne mycle '[with great zeal]'(123a). By unifying his poem in this way, the poet also gains the advantage of establishing the lofty purpose of the conflict at the centre of the Dream of the Rood. The battle that must be fought with elne mycle is the freeing of mankind. This battle Christ fights, the cross aids and the visionary proclaims.

As a result of their great courage and zeal, the three characters are also united in their establishment in glory. The poet uses some form of the verb settan 'establish' or 'settle' three time in the poem: asetton of the cross(32b); gesetton of Christ(67a) and asette of the poet(142a). All of these uses refer ultimately to glory in heaven, in itself an important recurring pattern. The most conventional pattern use of the verb settan is the last one: ond me ponne asette pær ic syppan mot/wunian on wuldre 'And it shall set me where I afterwards/May dwell in glory'(142-143a). The poet employs it here in the same sense as the Beowulf-poet uses it in describing the placing of the sun and moon at Creation: gesette sigehrepig sunnan ond monan/leoman to leohte landbuendum 'triumphant he established the brightness of sun and moon to be a light to earthdwellers'(Bwf.94-95). This use has distinct connotations of glory: the poet uses it in connection with his desire to be established in heaven's

glory. The other two instances, while linked with the former, are much more subtly used. The cross is set on a hill by its enemies: oððæt hie me on beorg asetton 'Men . . . set me on a hill'(32b). On a literal level, this is far removed from glory, but the use of settan in Christ's situation provides the link between the cross's establishment as a wæfersyn 'spectacle'(31a) and the ultimate glory desired by the visionary upon establishment in heaven. Curfon hie ðæt of beorhtan stane,/gesetton hie ðæron sigora wealdend 'They carved it of bright stone,/And set therein the Lord of victories'(66b-67a). The setting of Christ in the grave marks the same kind of debasement as the cross's establishment on the hill, but Christ remains the ruler of victories, whose native place is the glory to which the visionary aspires. Thus when the audience hears the third use of the verb, the other two echo in their memories, and the accumulated connotations of the first two will enrich the last use. As one can see, the poet uses subtle means of linking his characters and unifying his poem.

Closely associated with the establishment-in-glory pattern are two complexes dealing with, respectively, honouring and adorning, and glory. The honouring and adorning pattern centers around the Rood-poet's repeated use of some form of weorpian: geweorðode(15a), weorðlice(17a), weorðiað(81a), geweorðode(90a,94a), and weorpian(129a). The implications of this word go beyond merely adorning. In its

most complete definition, weorpian means 'to increase in honour.' Thus Beowulf says,"þær ic, peoden min, þine leode/weorðode weorcum." "'There, my lord, I increased the honour of your people by my deeds.'"(Bwf.2095-2096a) Because of the link between treasure and moral worth, the Beowulf-poet can say, of Wealhðeo, hyre syððan wæs/æfter beahðege breost geweorðod 'after receiving the neck-ring, her breast was honoured'(Bwf.2175b-2176). The kind of honour implied by weorpian is tied inextricably to the fame sought by every hero; the increase of fame augments the hero's honour and vice versa. In his usual way, the Rood-poet adds layer upon layer of meaning to a word as he repeats it throughout the poem. At first the cross is wædum geweorðode '[adorned with garments]'(15a) just as Beowulf is wæpnum geweorðad'adorned with weapons'(Bwf.250a) when he appears at Hroðgar's court. By line 81, however, the cross is talking about the less tangible "worthying" which menn ofer moldan, ond eall þeos mære gesceaft'[men of the earth]/And all this great and glorious creation'(82) accord it. The reason men honour it, the cross explains, is that it has been geweorðode wuldres ealdor '[honoured/adorned by the Ruler of glory]'(90). Moving from the general to the particular, the poet then says that his hope is to weorpian the cross as well.

The pattern of references to wuldor is tied to the weorpian complex. The cross can only become the wuldres treow 'tree of glory'(14b) through the honouring which the

wuldres ealdor 'Prince of glory'(90b) bestows on it. The same connection between cross and God is reiterated by wuldres beam '[beam] of glory'(97b) and wuldres cyning 'King of glory'(133b). The last three references to wuldor(135a, 143a,155a) all refer directly to heaven and recall the wuldres treow(14b) which stretches from earth to heaven, bridging the chasm between heaven and earth, righteousness and sin, and unifying the poem.

The Rood-poet has full control over his material at all times. He unifies his poem on many levels, relying as much on metaphoric unity as on technical repetition. Yet the technical repetition is skillfully handled, gaining levels of meaning as the poet uses it in the poem. The unity of the poem reinforces the fundamental message of the poem, the possibility of man's reconciliation to God.

Chapter VI: Conclusion

By placing the Dream of the Rood in its literary tradition, one can see how the Rood-poet has employed conventional themes and diction in new and original ways. He has composed a poem of subtlety, complexity and power by exploiting the tension between the Anglo-Saxon concepts of exile and community.

The theme of exile is of central importance to the Dream of the Rood. Without lessening any of the horror of the exiled state, the poet takes that Anglo-Saxon concept and broadens its application to include the metaphor of mankind's spiritual exile. The poet uses the symbol of the stained cross flowing with blood to express the spiritual exile of the visionary. Indeed, the poet uses the theme of exile on several levels, for when the visionary has been redeemed from his spiritual exile, he reverts to a more conventional use of the elegiac mode to describe the remainder of his life on earth.

Just as important as the exile metaphor is the heroic imagery. Heroic concepts and values provide the ideal in Anglo-Saxon literature. The poet uses the positive associations evoked by allusions to heroism to prepare his audience for a new non-physical kind of warfare. Traditional heroic poetry deals almost exclusively with battle; the Rood-poet

expands the heroic ideal in order to deal with a spiritual battle in a way that his hearers can comprehend. The poet's symbol for the heroic concepts in the Dream of the Rood, the splendent cross, contrasts absolutely with the stained cross that symbolizes the exile in the poem.

The central image of change in the Dream of the Rood contains both the stains and the splendour of the cross. One changes to the other. This transformation controls all the other instances of transformation in the poem. All the major characters in the poem, Christ, cross and visionary, undergo some kind of transformation, and the poet's technique in portraying this alteration identifies all the characters with each other. This identification of the characters reinforces the idea of mystical oneness with Christ that is the point of the didacticism of the poem.

The thematic unity of the poem rests partially on recurring verbal patterns found throughout the poem. Controversy regarding the unity of the poem splits critical opinion into the camp which states that the original poem ends at line 77, and the faction which claims the unity and single authorship of the whole poem. An examination of verbal patterns that occur in both parts of the poem shows that the poem is unified and that the didactic exhortation of the second half follows meaningfully from the emotional vision of the first.

This, then, is a study of the Dream of the Rood in its

secular literary tradition. An examination of the poem in relation to other Anglo-Saxon Christian poetry would prove useful in showing the manner in which the Dream of the Rood fits into that school of verse. Regardless of literary setting, however, the Dream of the Rood is a poem of extraordinary power, and its didactic thrust infuses the reader with the hope of redemption and the possibility of union with Christ.

Notes

Chapter I

[1]Kemp Malone, "Religious Poetry: Poems on Various Themes," in A Literary History of England, ed. A.C. Baugh (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1948), p.79.

[2]Jackson J. Campbell and James L. Rosier, eds., Poems in Old English (New York: Harper & Row, 1962),p.1.

[3]J.A. Burrow, "An Approach to the Dream of the Rood," in Old English Literature: Twenty-two Analytical Essays, ed. Martin Stevens, and Jerome Mandel (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1968),p.267.

[4]John V. Fleming, "The Dream of the Rood and Anglo-Saxon Monasticism," Traditio, 22(1966),47.

Chapter II

[1]Bede, A History of the English Church and People, trans. Leo Sherley-Price, and rev. R.E. Latham (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1968),pp.86-87.

[2]Bede, p.87.

[3]Donald K. Fry, "Themes and Type-Scenes in Elene 1-113," Speculum, 44(1969),36. For the study of these and other motifs in Old English literature, see also D.K. Crowne, "The Hero on the Beach: An Example of Composition by Theme in Old English Poetry," Neuphilologische Mitteilungen, 61(1960) and notes 4, 6, and 10 following.

[4]Leonard H. Frey, "Exile and Elegy in Anglo-Saxon Christian Epic Poetry," Journal of English and Germanic Philology, 62(1963), 294.

[5]E.V.K. Dobbie and G.P. Krapp,eds., The Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records: A Collective Edition, 6 Vols. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1931-1942). All citations of Old English poetry in this thesis will be taken from this

edition and all, except from The Dream of the Rood, will be cited by title and line numbers only following the quotation.

[6]Stanley B. Greenfield, "The Formulaic Expression of the Theme of 'Exile' in Anglo-Saxon Poetry," Speculum, (1955), 201.

[7]Frey, "Exile and Elegy," 295.

[8]Greenfield, "Formulaic Expression," 203.

[9]J.A. Burrow, "An Approach to the Dream of the Rood," in Old English Literature: Twenty-two Analytical Essays, ed., Martin Stevens, and Jerome Mandel (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1968), p.267.

[10]Stanley B. Greenfield, "The Theme of Spiritual Exile in Christ I," Philological Quarterly, 32(1953), 321.

[11]W.P. Ker, The Dark Ages (1904; rpt. London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1955), p. 265.

[12]E.V.K. Dobbie and G.P. Krapp, eds., The Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records: A Collective Edition, 6 Vols. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1931-1942). All citations from the Dream of the Rood will be taken from this edition, and will be cited by line numbers only following the quotation. Other helpful critical editions are: A.S. Cook, ed., The Dream of the Rood (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1905); Bruce Dickins and Alan Ross, eds., The Dream of the Rood, Methuen's Old English Library (London: Metheun and Co. Ltd., 1934) and Michael J. Swanton, ed. The Dream of the Rood (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1970).

[13]Richard Hamer, trans., A Choice of Anglo-Saxon Verse (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1970). All translation of the Dream of the Rood will be taken from this translation. Where I find this translation unsatisfactory or impossible to fit smoothly into my text, my emendation will be enclosed in square brackets.

[14]John V. Fleming, "The Dream of the Rood and Anglo-Saxon Monasticism," Traditio, 22(1966), 62-65. Another helpful study on the monastic life is R.B. Burlin, 'The Ruthwell Cross, the Dream of the Rood and the Vita Comtemplativa," Studies in Philology, 65(1968), 23-43.

[15]Alvin A. Lee, "Toward a Critique of the Dream of the Rood," in Anglo-Saxon Poetry: Essays in Appreciation for John C. McGalliard, ed. Lewis E. Nicholson, and Dolores W. Frese (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1975), p. 167-168.

[16]Howard R. Patch, "Liturgical Influence in the Dream of the Rood," Publications of the Modern Language Association, 34(1919), 251.

[17]Dom Peter Farina, " Wædum geweorðod in the Dream of the Rood," Notes and Queries, 212(1967), 6.

[18]Brian Branston, "The Bleeding God," in The Lost Gods of England (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974), pp. 157-170.

[19]W.O. Stevens, The Cross in the Life and Literature of the Anglo-Saxons, Yale Studies in English (New York: Henry Holt and Co,, 1904), p.59.

[20]Farina, " Wædum geweorðod," 5.

[21]Eugene R. Kintgen, "Echoic Repetition in Old English Poetry, Especially the Dream of the Rood," Neuphilologische Mitteilungen, 75(1974), 216.

[22]Margaret M. Schlauch, "The Dream of the Rood as Prosopopeia," in Essential Articles for the Study of Old English Poetry, ed. Jess B. Bessinger, Jr., and Stanley J. Kahrl (Hamden, Conn: Archon Books, 1968),pp.428-441.

[23]Alvin A. Lee, The Guest Hall of Eden: Four Essays on the Design of Old English Poetry (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1972), pp.13-14.

[24]Fleming, 63-64.

[25]Dorothy Whitelock, "The Interpretation of The Seafarer," in Old English Literature: Twenty-two Analytical Essays, ed. Martin Stevens, and Jerome Mandel (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1968), pp.198-211.

Chapter III

[1]Raymond J.S. Grant, "Beowulf and the World of Heroic Elegy," Leeds Studies in English, 8(1975), 61.

[2]Michael D. Cherniss, Ingeld and Christ: Heroic Concepts and Values in Old English Christian Poetry (The Hague: Mouton, 1972), p. 29.

[3]Cherniss, Ingeld and Christ, p. 29.

[4]Comitatus first appears in Tacitus, Germania, chapter 13. For a good discussion of the Anglo-Saxon concept of comitatus, see F.M. Stenton, Anglo-Saxon England (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), pp. 301-306; or, Peter Hunter Blair, Roman Britain and Early England: 55 B.C. - A.D. 871 (1963; New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1966), pp. 238-254.

[5]Dorothy Whitelock, ed., Sweet's Anglo-Saxon Reader in Prose and Verse (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), p. 3.

[6]L.N. McKill,"A Critical Study of the Old English Genesis A," Diss. State University of New York at Stonybrook, 1974, pp. 105-106. I have used McKill's categories with relevant modifications.

[7]Alvin A. Lee, The Guest Hall of Eden: Four Essays on the Design of Old English Poetry (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1972), pp. 13-14.

[8]Michael D. Cherniss, "The Cross as Christ's Weapon: the Influence of Heroic Literary Tradition on the Dream of the Rood," Anglo-Saxon England, 2(1973), 245.

[9]Carol Jean Wolf, "Christ as Hero in the Dream of the Rood," Neuphilologische Mitteilungen, 71(1970), 202-210.

[10]Surely there is more than a hint of Christ emptying himself in order that mankind may be exalted, mentioned in Philippians 2:7-11. So the poet speaks of Christ "unadorning" himself that the cross and the visionary may be adorned.

[11]For the approach-to-battle type scene of which the preparation for battle is but an element, see also D.K. Fry,

"Themes and Type-Scenes in Elene 1-113," Speculum, 44(1969), 35-45.

[12]John Canuteson, "The Crucifixion and the Second Coming in the Dream of the Rood," Modern Philology, 66(1969), 296.

[13]Wolf, "Christ as Hero," 203.

[14]J.A. Burrow, "An Approach to the Dream of the Rood," in Old English Literature: Twenty-two Analytical Essays, ed. Martin Stevens, and Jerome Mandel (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1968), p.259.

[15]Rosemary Woolf, "Doctrinal Influences in the Dream of the Rood," Medium Ævum, 27(1958), 137-153.

[16]Wolf, "Christ as Hero," 207-208.

[17]Kathleen Dubs, "Hæleð: Heroism in the Dream of the Rood," Neophilologus, 59(1975), 615.

[18]J.V. Fleming, "The Dream of the Rood and Anglo-Saxon Monasticism," Traditio, 22(1966), 45.

Chapter IV

[1]Alvin A. Lee, "Toward a Critique of the Dream of the Rood," in Anglo-Saxon Poetry: Essays in Appreciation for John C. McGalliard, ed. Lewis E. Nicholson, and Dolores W. Frese (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1975), p.189.

[2]Louis H. Leiter, "The Dream of the Rood: Patterns of Transformation," in Old English Poetry, ed. Robert P. Creed (Providence: Brown University Press, 1967), p. 94.

[3]Neil D. Isaacs, Structural Principles in Old English Poetry (Knoxville: University of Tenessee Press, 1968), p. 4.

[4]Eugene R. Kintgen, "Echoic Repetition in Old English Poetry, Especially the Dream of the Rood," Neuphilologische Mitteilungen, 75(1974), 216.

[5]Isaacs, p. 9.

[6]Isaacs, p. 3.

[7]Leiter, p. 110.

[8]Dorothy Whitelock, "The Audience of Beowulf," in Old English Literature: Twenty-two Analytical Essays, ed. Martin Stevens, and Jerome Mandel (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1968), p. 290.

[9]P.B. Taylor, "Text and Texture of the Dream of the Rood," Neuphilologische Mitteilungen, 75(1974), 195.

[10]This same idea, first found in one of Gregory's Latin homilies, is expressed in Christ II, 720-738a. Here Cynewulf describes the six great leaps of Christ: into the womb, into the manger, onto the cross, down to the grave, down further to hell and up to Heaven.

[11]Taylor, 197.

[12]F.H. Whitman, "The Dream of the Rood, 101a," The Explicator, 33(May, 1975), #70.

[13]This is based on I Corinthians 15:22, which says, "For as in Adam all died, so also in Christ shall all be made alive."

[14]Leiter, p. 101.

[15]Taylor, 194.

[16]L.N. McKill, "A Critical Analysis of the Old English Genesis A," Diss. State University of New York at Stonybrook, 1974, p. 105.

[17]Taylor, 199.

[18]Both Leiter, p. 111 and Taylor, 199ff. argue for the retention of holmwudu for these reasons.

[19]R.R. Edwards, "Narrative Technique and Distance in the Dream of the Rood," Papers on Language and Literature,

6(1970), 291 and 293.

[20]Isaacs, p. 5.

[21]Isaacs, p. 16.

[22]Rosemary Woolf, "Doctrinal Influences on the Dream of the Rood," Medium Ævum, 27(1958), 138-139.

Chapter V

[1]Bruce Dickins and Alan Ross, eds., The Dream of the Rood, Methuen's Old English Library (London: Methuen and Co., 1934, p. 18.

[2]Kemp Malone, "Religious Poetry: Poems on Various Themes," in A Literary History of England, ed. A.C. Baugh (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1948), p. 79.

[3]Michael Alexander, The Earliest English Poems (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1970), p. 147.

[4]J.A. Burrow, "An Approach to the Dream of the Rood," in Old English Literature: Twenty-two Analytical Essays, ed. Martin Stevens, and Jerome Mandel (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1968), p, 264.

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